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**CANADIAN BROADCAST STANDARDS COUNCIL  
ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

CTV re a News Report on Charles Ng's Sentencing

(CBSC Decision 98/99-1120)

Decided March 22, 2000

P. Fockler (Vice-Chair), R. Cohen (*ad hoc*), M. Hogarth and M. Ziniak

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**THE FACTS**

On June 30, 1999, CTV's 11:00 p.m. National News reported the results of the sentencing hearing of Charles Ng which had concluded that day in a California court. Ng, the notorious serial killer who had escaped from California in 1985, was recaptured in Canada soon thereafter and extradited to the United States in 1991 to face trial, was found guilty in February 1999 of the murders of 1984 and 1985 murders of 11 individuals (six men, three women and two baby boys). Leonard Lake, his accomplice in those crimes, had committed suicide in 1985. After a lengthy hearing, Ng was sentenced to be executed by lethal injection. As a part of CTV's 1 minute 47 second report of the outcome of that hearing, the network inserted a video clip of about seven seconds in length which showed either Ng or Lake beginning to cut the blouse of one of the female victims who was at that moment tied helplessly to a chair. The clip used was a short extract from one of the videotapes exhibited at the trial which had been shot by Ng and his cohort in the course of their sadistic crimes.

The complainant wrote directly to CTV's Vice President, News, and then to the CBSC two days later "to express [her] overwhelming anger at the complete decrepitude demonstrated by all involved in broadcasting" the brief clip showing the victim. While the full text of the correspondence between the complainant and CTV's Vice President, News, is included as an Appendix to this decision, a couple of short excerpts are included here.

How would you feel if your murdered daughter, mother, or sister's torture was videotaped and images of her terrifying ordeal were broadcast across the continent? Doesn't the airing of those segments encroach on the rights of that woman's family? How can you justify contributing to the pain of that horrible nightmare?

[...] Perhaps you refrained from airing any of the graphic violence. But the image of that terrified woman having the clothes hacked off her body will remain with me forever; there is no doubt in my mind that this is the substance of snuff movies.

[...] Not only have your actions caused harm to the families of murder victims everywhere, but you have violated my rights as a television viewer. I should not have to expect, or be prepared, to be subjected to those kinds of images. You may find the torture of murder victims interesting, informative, or pleasurable, but I don't. Yes, human atrocities are committed daily. Yes, this is part of what consists news [*sic*]. I might accept images of torture victims in the context of war, within the bounds of graphic content that our society deems acceptable. This might have a purpose in informing me of political issues. But I should not have to turn on the news and watch segments of what essentially is a snuff movie. There is a huge difference between war and the Ng video. The latter was videotaped for the sole purpose of bringing pleasure to the viewer(s).

CTV's Vice President, News, responded in part as follows (for his full reply, see the Appendix):

That image itself was troubling. But it was limited, and our editors ensured there was only the cutting of clothing that aired, no torture, no nudity or anything else that occurred during those horrible murders.

The videotape was part of the evidence presented at the murder trial. Other images from the videotape have appeared elsewhere on news and public affairs programs across North America. We apologize if you were offended, but we believe the single image we used was appropriate in the context of this horrible story.

The complainant was not satisfied by CTV's reply and, among the point-by-point responses to the justifications provided by its Vice President, News, argued:

- the portion of the videotape shown was only 7 seconds long (WHAT DOES LENGTH HAVE TO DO WITH WHETHER IT WAS RIGHT OR WRONG, or WHETHER IT SHOWED DISRESPECT TO THE VICTIM AND HER FAMILY?)

- only this act of violence was shown, not any further torture (IS HAVING YOUR CLOTHES HACKED OFF BEFORE BEING KILLED NOT VIOLENT ENOUGH? THIS VIOLENT ACT WAS VIDEOTAPED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF GIVING SICK PEOPLE PLEASURE. ...)

- other networks and newspapers aired or printed similar images. (WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH WHETHER IT IS RIGHT OR WRONG? IT SHOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED ON ANY NETWORK.)

[...]

Your broadcast demonstrated inappropriate editorial judgment in the reporting of violence, showed irrelevant details, portrayed the victim without respect or dignity, and perpetuated the link between women in a sexual context and women as victims of violence.

## THE DECISION

The Ontario Regional Council reviewed the logger tape of the news report as well as all of the correspondence and considered the complaint under Article 6 of the *Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) Violence Code* and Articles 3 and 4 of the *Radio and Television News Directors Association of Canada (RTNDA) Code of (Journalistic) Ethics*. It is the view of the Council that the report in question is, as a result of the inclusion of the brief film clip of the victim, in violation of Article 6 of the *Violence Code* and Article 4 of the *RTNDA Code*, although not in breach of Article 3 of the latter Code.

### The Characterization of the News Clip

In the view of the Ontario Regional Council, the decision turns on the characterization of the news clip of Charles Ng (or his co-assailant) cutting the blouse of the victim, who, as noted above, was tied helplessly to a chair. CTV's Vice President, News, acknowledged that the "image itself was troubling" but essentially went no further. He said that the video component was "limited" and argued that "our editors ensured there was only the cutting of clothing that aired, *no torture*, no nudity or anything else that occurred during those horrible murders. [Emphasis added.]"

That is the nub of the matter. While it is true that nothing as *obvious* as nudity or overt brutality and blood was shown, it is difficult to imagine that the threshold event of the cutting of the victim's clothes while she was immobilized, not only physically, but psychologically, could be fairly understood as causing anything other than helpless agony, stark terror and torture *from the victim's perspective*.

### Pictorial Representation of Violence and Aggression

It is hardly necessary to observe that the Council understands and accepts the use of relevant video clips in news stories. As the B.C. Regional Council said in *CHAN-TV (BCTV) re Newscast (Toronto Subway Death)* (CBSC Decision 97/98-0383, May 20, 1998),

It goes without saying that television news reports often contain visuals depicting acts of violence. This is to be expected, for television is by its nature a visual medium. Audiences expect more than "talking heads" in their newscasts and it would be unreasonable on the part of broadcasters not to provide the video elements which are so essential to the medium. That being said, Canada's private broadcasters and radio and television news directors have created codes which express their agreed limitations to the depiction of violence. These are found in Clause 6 of the *Violence Code* and Article 3 of the *RTNDA Code of (Journalistic) Ethics*.

It is the view of the Council that the segment depicting the victim employed in this newscast constituted an unnecessary pictorial representation of violence and aggression. In the first place, the CTV story had to do with the *sentencing* of one of the two murderers, not with

any question of the actual commission of the crimes. If it *might* have had relevance and purpose in telling the story of the criminal activities themselves (and while the Council does not so conclude in the context of *that* story), it does readily find that the inclusion of the footage in *this* story was irrelevant.

While the inclusion of unnecessary footage is generally a point of little more than the efficacy of the story being told or an evaluation of the quality of the editing of the piece, the potential inconsequential nature of the evaluation disappears when the material is violent and aggressive. In such a case, Article 6.1 of the *Violence Code* calls for the use of “appropriate editorial judgment” in the selection of the pictorial representation. In the B.C. decision referred to above, the four-second video clip of the dying woman was integral to the very accident which was being reported on the newscast in question. Despite its *relevance* to that story, the B.C. Council concluded that relevance is not the only factor to be considered in the exercise of appropriate editorial judgment in a given instance.

While, in the matter at hand, the B.C. Regional Council accepts that the news story was inherently violent and that *some* pictorial representation of the violence that occurred may have been acceptable, it finds that the shot of the victim’s face as she lay dying on the paramedics’ gurney was utterly unnecessary to the story. It added no clarification of any of the issues, no expository value to the sad tale, and no information which the viewer required to understand the series of events. The additional depiction ought reasonably to have been expected to make a viewer cringe or, at least, feel discomfited.

On this occasion, the Ontario Regional Council also concludes that those responsible for the structure of the story went too far. In the terms laid down in the B.C. case, the shot of the tortured victim was utterly unnecessary, marginally relevant at best, added no clarification of the issues reported that day, no expository value to the brutal tale and absolutely no information which was required to understand the series of events related to the sentencing.

To respond to the broadcaster’s assertion, it is not necessary for a clip to be as unsubtle as including on-screen nudity or physical violence or bloodshed for it to be readily understood as violent. The Atlantic Regional Council dealt with this concept in two decisions which dealt with dramatic programming, rather than actuality, but the underlying principles relating to on-screen versus off-screen imagery are applicable. In *CIHF-TV re an episode of Millennium* (CBSC Decision 96/97-0044, February 14, 1997), the Council found that, in the program in question,

the scenes complained of do not generally show the occurrence of violent acts as much as they do the *results* of the violent acts and, at that, the violence is not overplayed. There is also violent *imagery* and effective editing which give rise to fear, if not terror, on the part of the viewer.

The matter was explored further in *CIHF-TV re an episode of the X-Files* (CBSC Decision 96/97-0043, Decided February 14, 1997), where the same Council ruled:

It is the Council's view that scenes which do not depict violent *actions* may, nonetheless, constitute "violence" within the meaning of the *Violence Code*. ...

The extent to which the scenes show violent acts rather than consequences of acts, or are graphic rather than subtle, may help to determine whether or not they are *gratuitous* in their presentation. They will not, however, escape that characterization solely because they are traces of off-screen occurrences.

Although the broadcaster apparently does not see the complainant's point, the Council has no doubt whatsoever that the cutting off of a *real* victim's clothes in *anticipation* of the awful crimes which were to follow (feared, no doubt, by the victim but known after the fact by the television audience) constituted an act of terrifying violence, exceeding the limits of the term "aggression" used in Article 6.1 of the *Violence Code*.

Furthermore, the Council considers it important to underscore the issue raised by the complainant, namely, that "the videotapes [had been] made by Charles Ng and his partner," in other words, the murderers themselves. While the language of the *Violence Code* lays down the requirements of "appropriate editorial judgment ... in the pictorial representation of violence" in Article 6.1 and "[c]autious ... in the selection of video which depicts violence" in Article 6.2, the Council wishes to stress the special *additional* vigilance which a broadcaster must bring to any such editorial choices in circumstances where the video material it wishes to use has been created by the *perpetrators* of a crime as a part of their malevolent activities.

### **Respect for the Dignity of the Victim**

There is no issue here of an invasion of privacy. The names of the three female victims had been publicly disclosed during the course of the trial (although not revealed in this particular CTV news report). The sister of one of the victims was also interviewed as a part of this news report. There was no indication, however, in the CTV report of the identity of the particular victim in the seven-second video clip. Insofar as the presentation of an image (which could be identified by someone) is concerned, the CBSC has said the following in previous decisions. In *CTV re Canada AM (Airborne Hazing)* (CBSC Decision 94/95-0159, March 12, 1996), the Ontario Council ruled:

The point is that the issue is not so much the recording and broadcasting of the *image* of the individual as it is the *identification* of the person. Where the broadcaster provides no information which permits the public at large to identify the individual, such as in this case, the broadcaster has not interfered with that person's right to privacy. The fact that the individual filmed and those close to him may know who he is does not interfere with his right to be free from identification by the public at large.

The B.C. Regional Council ruled similarly in *CHAN-TV re Newscast (Recycling Society)* (CBSC Decision 96/97-0004, March 10, 1997) as did the Ontario Regional Council in *CKCO-TV re News Report (Police Arrest)* (CBSC Decision 96/97-0174, February 20, 1998):

In this case, the Council notes that the report in question does not mention the name of either the accused or, for that matter, the victim of the assault, and no other indicators were given in the report which would permit the identification of the two persons portrayed by persons other than those who already knew them.

The concern of the Council is not *that* aspect of Article 4 of the *RTNDA Code of (Journalistic) Ethics*; it is rather that part of the provision relating to the respect for the dignity of the victim. The words of the B.C. Regional Council in *CHAN-TV re Newscast (Toronto Subway Death)* (CBSC Decision 97/98-0383, May 20, 1998) are chillingly apt here:

In the Council's view, there is a distinction to be made with respect to showing other less readily identifiable parts of a person's body, such as arms, legs, torso, etc. and showing the victim's face. It is not so much an issue of the identification of the individual (especially in this case where the victim had been named) as it is an issue of identification of pain, agony, distress, even distortion of the individual, in short, an affront to the dignity, if not the privacy, of the victim and her family and friends.

In this case, if not moreso than in the B.C. case, the Council believes that the broadcast of the victim *in extremis* was a significant affront to the dignity of the soon-to-be tortured, assaulted and murdered young woman.

### **Sensationalization**

While the complainant did not herself raise the question of sensationalization in either of the letters she sent to the CBSC, the Council considers that the matter before it bears so many similarities to the British Columbia decision referred to above that it ought to deal with the issue. It also provides an opportunity for the Council to expand on its understanding of the meaning of "sensationalize" (as used in "will not sensationalize news items" in Article 3 of the *RTNDA Code of Ethics*) and the related nouns "sensationalization" and "sensationalism". As applied in that article, the usage constitutes a relatively modern definition which is related directly to a form of journalism or journalistic practice. The Council understands the clause to mean, for these purposes, that a broadcaster will not create or so present a news item to *shock*, rather than *inform*, the audience. There are obviously stories which, by their nature, are shocking or terrifying, titillating or salacious. The point, though, is that broadcasters adhering to the *RTNDA Code of (Journalistic) Ethics* agree not to purposefully convert a story which is not or need not be, *by its nature*, of that category, into one which becomes shocking.

In applying that principle to the matter at hand, the Council considers that, despite the fact that the *entire* videotape created by the murderers (and screened in the courtroom) is reported to have included material which would have been viewed as sensationalistic, it is not *that* material which the broadcaster chose to include in this newscast. While the Council has concluded that *no* part of that tape ought to have been broadcast in

connection with *this* story, it does not consider that its airing amounted to sensationalization. To adopt the words of the B.C. decision referred to above, “while it was unnecessary, and, in *that* sense, gratuitous, it was not sensational and consequently not in breach of Article 3 of the *RTNDA Code of (Journalistic) Ethics*.”

### **The Defences Raised by the Broadcaster**

The broadcaster’s Vice President, News, stated that the “videotape was part of the evidence presented at the murder trial.” The Council believes it relevant and important to make absolutely clear the difference between the courtroom and the television screen. In the broad quest for truth which occurs before a judge, and occasionally a jury, the rules of evidence apply. *Any* material which conforms to those rules and is critical to the determination of guilt or innocence may, indeed, must be brought to that forum, however cruel, shocking or violent. There are no other Codes which regulate that entitlement on the basis of the sensibilities of the courtroom or greater audience at that level. Broadcasters, on the other hand, have established codes to deal with what ought and ought not to be presented to that greater audience. What has been presented to the judge and jury is not, *on that account*, necessarily suitable for the television audience. It is for precisely *such* reasons that the broadcasters, with the approval of the regulator, have seen fit to *require* the exercise of *appropriate* editorial judgment in the selection of video material to be shown in a news report. Its previous use in a trial is simply not a defence to those choices.

As to the fact that the contested images “have appeared elsewhere on news and public affairs programs across North America,” the Council needs only to say two things. First, with respect to the airing of the footage in the United States of America, the CBSC has often made the point that Canadian and American standards are simply not the same. Not only are the basic provisions of constitutional law regarding the issue of freedom of expression or speech different, but American broadcasters have also not established *any* Codes applicable to their industry while Canadian broadcasters have adopted Codes with respect to ethics, violence, gender portrayal and journalistic ethics. In the result, programming which is acceptable there, where there are no common enforced broadcaster Codes, may not be in Canada and, interestingly enough, some material which is not deemed offensive or problematic here, might not pass muster at the American network Standards and Practices Departments. Simply put, the standards are not the same on both sides of the border.

Second, with respect to the possible broadcast of the footage elsewhere in Canada, it should be remembered that the decisions of the Council are rendered in *response* to complaints. They deal with the programming after the fact and only to the extent that it is brought by viewers, or listeners, to the self-regulatory process. If the fact that the material had been aired elsewhere (and, better still, had not been complained of) were a defence, then the wider the spread of the offending material, the better off the broadcaster would be. Fortunately, that is not the case; if it were, the self-regulatory system would be a

shambles. It is no defence to a possible Code breach that more than one, or even many, broadcasters may have committed it.

It is to the credit of the process which the private broadcasters have established that well-publicized decisions of the Council are adhered to not only by the broadcaster or broadcasters involved in each decision but also by those broadcasters to which the identical or even analogous circumstances may apply. When the CBSC's decision in *CIII-TV re Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* (CBSC Decision 93/94-0270 and 0277, October 24, 1994) was rendered, it was respected not only by Global Television but by other CBSC members and even YTV, at that time not yet a CBSC member. When the decision in *CHOM-FM and CILQ-FM re the Howard Stern Show* (CBSC Decisions 97/98-0001+ and 0015+, October 17 and 18, 1997) was rendered, no other stations in Canada picked up the syndicated American talk show and the current broadcasters modified the program to conform to the Canadian private broadcasters' codified standards. Canadian stations made similar broadcasting choices following the CBSC's decision in *CIHF-TV and CKMI-TV re The Jerry Springer Show* (CBSC Decisions 97/98-1277 and 98/99-0294 and 446, May 28 and June 23, 1999).

### **Broadcaster Responsiveness**

In addition to assessing the relevance of the Codes to the complaint, the CBSC always assesses the *responsiveness* of the broadcaster to the substance of the complaint. In this case, the Council considers that the broadcasters' responses addressed fully and fairly the issues raised by the complainants. Nothing more is required. Consequently, the broadcaster has not breached the Council's standard of responsiveness.

### **CONTENT OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DECISION**

The station is required to announce this decision forthwith, in the following terms, during prime time and, within the next thirty days, to provide confirmation of the airing of the statement to the CBSC and to the complainant who filed a Ruling Request.

The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council has found that CTV breached provisions of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' *Violence Code* and the Radio and Television News Directors Association *Code of (Journalistic) Ethics* in its 11 p.m. newscast of June 30, 1999. By including a video shot of one of the victims of the serial murderer Charles Ng, CTV unnecessarily depicted the violence associated with that tragedy, contrary to the provisions of Article 6 of the *Violence Code*. The addition of that shot of the victim's face in the last moments of her life also failed to show respect for the dignity of the victim as required by Article 4 of the *RTNDA Code of (Journalistic) Ethics*.

*This decision is a public document upon its release by the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council.*

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**APPENDIX**  
**TO CBSC DECISION 98/99-1120**  
*CTV re a News Report on Charles Ng's Sentencing*

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**I. The Complaint**

The following e-mail complaint was sent to the CBSC on July 2, 1999:

I am writing to complain about CTV National's 11 o'clock news broadcast Wednesday June 30<sup>th</sup>, in which they aired segments of Charles Ng's video(s). This seems to be a clear violation of the news broadcasting codes, i.e. to "include only the relevant details" and to "respect the dignity and privacy of the people involved". I can not abide by this behaviour on part of this television network and want to know exactly what I can do to prevent it from ever happening again. Please find below a copy of the letter I have sent to Robert Hurst, the Director of CTV's National News.

To this e-mail was attached the following e-mail addressed to CTV.

I am a 30 year-old, Oxford-trained scientist who freely exercises my right to turn off the television if I do not like what I see. I am writing to express my overwhelming anger at the complete decrepitude demonstrated by all involved in broadcasting Wednesday, June 30<sup>th</sup>'s 11 o'clock news program. How dare you air segments of the videotapes made by Charles Ng and his partner. How dare you.

How would you feel if your murdered daughter, mother, or sister's torture was videotaped and images of her terrifying ordeal were broadcast across the continent? Doesn't the airing of those segments encroach on the rights of that woman's family? How can you justify contributing to the pain of that horrible nightmare. What about the Mahaffey's and French's. I am sure those images would have filled them with unimaginable grief, and anxiety of the thought it might be shots of their own daughters next time.

Of course, you are not responsible for the pain of these people. You are just reporting the actions of some aberrant killers. And of course, your viewing audience is quite interested in seeing this, at least you must have thought so. If that is your excuse for your amoral actions. I ask you: is that not the same argument expected from the purveyors of snuff movies? i.e. I have the right to sell this movie because there is an interested audience? The analogy with a dealer of snuff movies is a fitting one. Perhaps you refrained from airing any of the graphic violence. But the image of that terrified woman having the clothes hacked off her body will remain with me forever; there is no doubt in my mind that this is the substance of snuff movies. And you people, lacking any character whatsoever, have contributed to feeding the evil human desire in those who find watching human suffering pleasurable. I hope you are proud of yourselves.

Not only have your actions caused harm to the families of murder victims everywhere, but you have violated my rights as a television viewer. I should not have to expect, or be prepared, to be subjected to those kinds of images. You may find the torture of murder victims interesting, informative, or pleasurable, but I don't. Yes, human atrocities are committed daily. Yes, this is part of what consists news. I might accept images of torture victims in the context of war, within the bounds of graphic content that our society deems acceptable. This might have a purpose in informing me of political issues. But I should not have to turn on the news and watch segments of what essentially is a snuff movie. There is a huge difference between war and the Ng video. The latter was videotaped for

the sole purpose of bringing pleasure to the viewer(s). You have participated in those actions; how dare you drag me into it with you.

Each and everyone of you who is responsible for letting that segment air has demonstrated a complete lack of character. There is no excuse. I am ashamed to belong to a society that allows you to abuse your powers in this way without consequence. How you can be so callous is beyond me.

If these words have reached any shred of decency you may still possess (if you ever did), I hope you will attempt to make amends for the harm you have done. Contacting the Mahaffey's and French's and assuring them that you will not make the same mistake again, if given the opportunity, is a good place to start. Apologizing to the family of the victim whose suffering you so thoughtlessly shared with your audience would demonstrate some semblance of decency. A financial gift to them or to a victim's rights organization seems to me to be a fitting form of restitution. I for one, will not accept your behaviour, and will not be watching CTV for many years to come. Furthermore, I shall be contacting to both CBSC and my MP to express my utter disgust of CTV's judgment.

## **II. The Broadcaster's Response**

CTV's Vice President, News responded to the complaint on July 8 with the following:

This e-mail is in response to your note about our CTV News report on the Charles Ng death sentence.

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, a California court decided Charles Ng would be executed by lethal injection. Our coverage was one minute and 47 seconds. Within the story there were 7 seconds of videotape of Ng cutting clothing off a woman. That image itself was troubling. But it was limited, and our editors ensured there was only the cutting of clothing that aired, no torture, no nudity or anything else that occurred during those horrible murders.

The videotape was part of the evidence presented at the murder trial. Other images from the videotape have appeared elsewhere on news and public affairs programs across North America. We apologize if you were offended, but we believe the single image we used was appropriate in the context of this horrible story.

You suggest in your letter we "have contributed to feeding the evil human desire in those who find watching human suffering pleasurable." On the contrary, our story was about the opposite. The story was about punishment for those who murder.

You suggest in your letter we were insensitive to the families of the victims. But the story reported on the families of the victims. The story showed a public demonstration by victims of violence. The story also interviewed a victim's sister who said she had been waiting for 11 years to see Ng sentenced.

The reporter concluded the story with:

*"The families of his victims can take some comfort knowing Charles Ng is one step closer to the death chamber."*

I can assure you that our senior editors carefully prepared this report to ensure the images and words used were appropriate, balanced and within context of the horrible murders Ng had committed.

### III. Additional Correspondence

The complainant was unsatisfied with the broadcaster's response and requested, on July 24, 1999 that her complaint be referred to the Ontario Regional Council for adjudication. With her Ruling Request, the complainant attached the following e-mail, dated July 19, to CTV:

Thank you for your response to my message expressing my anger and concern over the Charles Ng segment aired on Wednesday June 31<sup>st</sup>.

The explanations you give for airing portions of Ng's videotape of one of his victims do not justify your blatant disregard for the CBSC broadcasting codes, not to mention basic ethics.

To summarize your response, CTV showed images of Charles Ng's victim tied to a chair while her assailant hacked her clothes off because:

- the portion of the videotape shown was only 7 seconds long (WHAT DOES LENGTH HAVE TO DO WITH WHETHER IT WAS RIGHT OR WRONG, or WHETHER IT SHOWED DISRESPECT TO THE VICTIM AND HER FAMILY?)

- only this act of violence was shown, not any further torture (IS HAVING YOUR CLOTHES HACKED OFF BEFORE BEING KILLED NOT VIOLENT ENOUGH? THIS VIOLENT ACT WAS VIDEOTAPED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF GIVING SICK PEOPLE PLEASURE. YOU PARTICIPATED BY GIVING THE TAPE AN AUDIENCE.)

- other networks and newspapers aired or printed similar images. (WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH WHETHER IT IS RIGHT OR WRONG? IT SHOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED ON ANY NETWORK. YOUR NETWORK MARKETS ITSELF AS BEING A NATIONAL NEWS PROGRAM OF GREAT INTEGRITY; WHAT A GOOD EXAMPLE YOU ARE SETTING!)

- your story was about punishment for those who murder (IF SO, THEN YOU HAVE DISREGARDED THE BROADCASTING CODE THAT STATES THAT YOU SHOULD ONLY PRESENT THE RELEVANT DETAILS. IN A STORY ABOUT NG'S SENTENCING, WHY DOES THE PUBLIC NEED TO VIEW HIS SNUFF TAPE?)

- you ended your story with a public demonstration by victims of violence, and an interview with the sister of the victim shown, hence demonstrating sensitivity to the victim's family (SO WHAT YOU DO DURING ONE SEGMENT OF A BROADCAST IS IRRELEVANT IF YOU MAKE UP FOR IT ELSEWHERE?)

- and finally, you assure me your editors carefully prepared this report (SO I AM TO TAKE IT THAT YOUR EDITORS ARE JUDGE AND JURY AS TO WHAT IS RIGHT AND WRONG, UNLIKE ME, WHO IS JUST A VIEWER, AND THEREFORE NOT CAPABLE OF HAVING A SAY IN WHAT IS ETHICALLY APPROPRIATE FOR THE TV SCREEN?)

Your broadcast demonstrated inappropriate editorial judgment in the reporting of violence, showed irrelevant details, portrayed the victim without respect or dignity, and perpetuated the link between women in a sexual context and women as victims of violence. I am pursuing the matter to its fullest extent with CBSC, and beyond.

