
APPENDIX

CBSC Decision 11/12-0236 CFNY-FM re the *Dean Blundell Show* (Murder in Mexico)

The Complaint

The CBSC received the following complaint on September 22, 2011:

Hello,

On September 15th of this year, between 06:55 am and 07:00 am, on my car drive to the airport I listened to a radio broadcast on CFNY 102.1 in Toronto. The 3 radio personnel were commenting on a news story "Zetas Cartel Leaves 2 Bodies Hanging From Bridge as a Warning to Mexican Bloggers". For several minutes of open air broadcast the announcers joked and joked about the fate of the two young murdered victims found hanging from a bridge. They made jokes about the 2 young adults who were severely tortured before being murdered and about blogging on Facebook, which they mentioned was a gay thing to do. At one point, one of the announcers actually tried to distance himself from the topic. The joking about this event was entirely repugnant and disgusting, and it went on for minutes. I believe that this went beyond any standard that is set for broadcasting and I feel that an on-air apology should be made to the public and myself. Please try and listen to the tapes of this broadcast to decide for yourself. I left a voice mail message with one of the Corus Entertainment executives regarding the broadcast that morning; however, it remains unanswered prompting this email.

Broadcaster Response

The station responded on October 14:

The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (the "CBSC") has asked us to respond to your email of September 27, 2011 in which you raised concerns regarding comments made during the *Dean Blundell Show* that aired on CFNY on September 15, 2011. Specifically, you expressed concerns regarding comments made by the program hosts, Dean Blundell and Todd Shapiro, which you found "repugnant and disgusting" and which, in your view, "went beyond any standard that is set for broadcasting".

We have reviewed the audio from that morning's show. As you are aware, the hosts were discussing a news story about a Mexican drug cartel that had allegedly tortured and killed two people who had made comments about the cartel on certain social media sites. There is no question that the discussion was graphic and unpleasant in many respects. Much of that unpleasantness stemmed from the gruesomeness of the event itself, none of which was spared. And while jokes made by the hosts were intended to bring levity to the subject, we can appreciate that humour about a news story of this kind may not be perceived as funny by some members of the audience, regardless of the hosts' intention.

This being said, the CBSC does not require a broadcaster to ensure that its content pleases everyone. The CBSC recognizes that personal tastes differ, and its mandate under the Code

does not require it to evaluate matters of taste. The CBSC applies current social norms in its interpretation of the Code, acknowledges that a program may not be “everyone’s cup of tea” and assumes that some members of society will be offended (*CFJP (TQS) re Quand l’amour est gai*, CBSC Decision 94/95-0204).

In view of this, we do not believe that the program violated the Code. We do regret, however, that you were offended by some of our programming. We take our responsibilities as broadcasters very seriously, and work hard to make sure all of our programming complies with the *Broadcasting Act*, the *Radio Regulations* and the Code and standards required of us as a member of the CBSC.

We trust that this letter has addressed your concerns. We recognize the importance of listener feedback and appreciate all comments.

Additional Correspondence

The complainant filed his Ruling Request on November 15 with the following note:

The response to this complaint is unacceptable. The standards for this broadcast are the letter of the law and that’s really the only protection afforded to the public. Asking to self administer standards for this broadcaster is a bit of a joke.