
APPENDIX

CBSC Decision 04/05-0177 CITS-TV (CTS) re *John Hagee Today* ("Diamonds for Successful Living")

The Complaint

The following complaint dated September 18, 2004 was sent to the CRTC and forwarded to the CBSC in due course:

To whom it may concern

I am writing regarding a program on channel 25, CTS, which broadcasts to London, Ottawa and Toronto. At 11:30 on Friday evening, Sept 17th, this station aired a program featuring Pastor John Hagee who was preaching to a large audience. If I am not mistaken, the program was called "Diamonds for Successful Living" and is an American production.

While I certainly believe in free speech, I found an alarming amount of what Mr. Hagee said to be quite hateful toward Homosexuals. Furthermore, this had little to do with religion and was blatantly hate and fear mongering. To my understanding, promoting such hate is now against the law in Canada. Unfortunately I was unable to record this program otherwise a VHS tape would have accompanied this letter. However, I did manage to write down a few quotes that were said by Mr. Hagee. The first: "Homosexuals recruit your children". This is unquestionably an inappropriate statement implying that all gays wish to harm children, be it sexually or by other means. Second: Referring to the "Homosexual Lobby", Mr Hagee says, "They no longer respect us." This statement puts words in others' mouths, and the deliberate intent is to stir negative emotion towards Homosexuals. He went on with more anti-gay comments which I was unable to write down. My description here does little to outline the extent of what was said. I had to turn the TV off. Admittedly, I found the first few minutes of Hagee's overly dramatic presentation to be quite comical, but once the seriousness of his words rang true and the camera panned over the applauding audience I was sickened. It is completely unnecessary to air such hate and ignorance. There is no purpose for it.

I certainly hope that the CRTC will contact CTS to investigate this matter. That this program airs at such a late time slot is irrelevant, as such hateful propaganda has no place on Canadian television. Thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your reply.

Broadcaster Response

The broadcaster responded to the complainant's letter on October 15 with the following:

I am in receipt of your complaint through the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council file # 04/05-177 regarding *John Hagee Today* episode "Diamonds For Successful Living" broadcast date Sept. 17/04.

My colleagues and I have closely reviewed the program in question a few times. While Pastor Hagee expresses his opinions strongly, we did not find them to contravene our Code of Ethics or any Canadian broadcasting regulation. His comments are all based on quotes and verifiable sources. The program contained two problematic statements, which we find to be strong opinions based in fact and as such, not contraventions of our Code.

1. "...homosexuals can not reproduce so they recruit your children".
2. (the Gay agenda for public schools is to)... "start brainwashing your children from day one with their position".

Pastor Hagee bases the recruitment comment on often published statements of Gay leaders and US-based organizations, an example of which I list here:

Boston-based *Gay Community News* in its February 1987 issue:

"We shall sodomize your sons, emblems of your feeble masculinity, of your shallow dreams and vulgar lies. ... Your sons shall become our minions and do our bidding. They will be recast in our image. They will come to crave and adore us."

Pastor Hagee's second statement must be taken in [the] context of his comment on the new sexual education curricula in the United States. He cites SIECUS, the organization that acts in an advisory capacity to US schools on matters [of] sexual education – as a source for his information. One can survey the organization's website to confirm that the information it provides promotes sexuality, homosexuality – and rarely promotes abstinence. More often than not, it opposes abstinence education.

It is never our intention to spread hate on CTS TV at an hour of our programming day. Thank you for your comments, we continue to monitor this program closely.

Additional Correspondence

The complainant returned his Ruling Ruling on October 27, along with the following letter:

Thank you for your assistance regarding my complaint about CITS-TV. With this letter, I wish to express why I am unsatisfied with the reply from CITS and have chosen to proceed with the ruling request.

Firstly, the letter by CTS TV Program Manager [...] states: "The program contained two problematic statements, which we find to be strong opinions based in fact and as such, not contraventions of our code." I would agree that the two statements outlined are indeed strong opinions, but they are not based in fact.

The first statement is "... homosexuals can not reproduce so they recruit your children." While it is a fact that homosexual couples cannot reproduce on their own, it is not a fact that they recruit children. It is important to remember the context in which this statement was said during the broadcast. Pastor Hagee was speaking to an audience and implied that homosexual couples would take children directly from their families, and as such their children are unsafe. This [is] an untrue statement as, should a homosexual couple want to have a family they would adopt a parent-less child in the usual way, through an agency, or make use of current medical technology that would allow for the conception of their own child. Furthermore, the use of the word "recruit" diminishes the role of a homosexual as a parent or guardian figure, and implies that all such individuals have devious or sexual intentions toward

children. Therefore, this statement is false and was intended to foster fear and hatred toward homosexuals.

To justify this comment, [the Program Manager] offered a quote from a 1987 issue of the Boston-based *Gay Community News* that reads: “We shall sodomize your sons, emblems of your feeble masculinity, of your shallow dreams and vulgar lies. ... Your sons shall become our minions and do our bidding. They will be recast in our image. They will come to crave and adore us.” While I do not know the context in which the quote was used for the article, I would none the less agree that it is quite rude. I would certainly agree that it was morally wrong of the author to publish such a statement and, if not written in jest, I would question the author’s sanity. Clearly it is illogical to argue that such a foolish statement would summarize the thoughts or intentions of the general homosexual population. As the newspaper quote is offensive, the correct response would be to target the publisher with a complaint, rather than target all homosexuals by broadcasting a blanket statement. Furthermore, by citing this quote CTS seems to be suggesting the concept “Because they said something bad about us, we have the right to say something bad about them”, which is clearly not the position of a responsible broadcaster. Lastly, my complaint is about a broadcast in the year 2004, and as such, a newspaper article from 1987 is irrelevant.

The second statement is: (the Gay agenda for public schools is to) ... “start brainwashing your children from day one with their position.” It is astonishing that in his reply letter [the Program Manager] would claim that this statement is “... based in fact ...”. He suggests that the “... statement must be taken in context of (Mr. Hagee’s) comment on the new sexual education curricula in the United States.” Yet, this information does not prove the occurrence of “brainwashing”, nor does it justify that Hagee is correct in describing homosexuals in this manner [*sic*]. Furthermore, if one was to take the comment in context as suggested, and watched the program in question, the hateful tone and manner [*sic*] of Mr. Hagee’s speech would be all too clear. [The Program Manager] seems more concerned about the American organization Hagee discusses, SIECUS, and writes that the organization “... rarely promotes abstinence. More often than not, it opposed abstinence education.” I respect his position on that topic, yet, these concerns are irrelevant as nowhere in my initial complaint do I express concern about whether it is right or wrong to promote abstinence. Nor does [the Program Manager]’s characterization of this American organization justify Hagee’s comment about “brainwashing”.

Lastly, [the Program Manager]’s letter does not address the fact that this program originates from the United States, as does the root of Hagee’s concerns along with the support material used to defend them, while CTS is a Canadian broadcaster. I am not satisfied that CTS has the right to import and broadcast such hateful remarks. The origin of a program, whether it is from inside or outside of Canada, does not negate CTS from [*sic*] its responsibility as a broadcaster. Here in Canada, it is wrong to promote hate toward homosexuals, and CTS was wrong to air Mr. Hagee’s comments. [The Program Manager] then furthered this critical error by claiming in his response letter that there was in fact no wrongdoing. Of the comments in question, he writes “... we did not find them to contravene our Code of Ethics or any Canadian broadcasting regulation.” I would like [the Program Manager] to be aware of two statements from the *Code of Ethics* page of the CBSC web site:

1. “It is recognized that the most valuable asset of a broadcaster is public respect, which must be earned and can be maintained only by adherence to the highest possible standards of public service and integrity.”

2. “... broadcasters shall ensure that their programming contains no abusive or unduly discriminatory material or comment which is based on matters of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status or physical or mental disability.”

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.