
APPENDIX B

CBSC Decision 08/09-1628 CIHT-FM re a "Josie & The City" segment on *The Morning Hot Tub*

The Complaint

The CBSC received the following complaint on May 5, 2009 via its webform:

station: CIHT Radio (HOT 89.9) Ottawa
program: *Morning Hot Tub*: Mauler, Rush, Jenni and Josie
date: May 5, 2009
time: 7:40 am
concern: Inappropriate sexual content.

While driving my children to school (ages 13 and 10), the "Josie in the City" segment came on and the subject was Oprah Winfrey's next program about the big O, not standing for Oprah, but for "orgasm". This led to a side conversation about a prior Oprah show, which was referred to as very controversial, in which a noted sex therapist recommended the introduction of young girls to vibrators, so that they did not have to rely on boys for pleasure.

I was trying to turn the radio off, because the content was way beyond the realms of what I consider to be appropriate for a station whose primary demographic includes pre-teen and teen listeners. My 13-year-old daughter was blocking my access to the power button because the content piqued her curiosity, so more was heard than I wanted.

This is not the only occasion that I have had to turn off that station because of the adult nature of the content at that time of day, however, it is the only occasion that I was unable to turn off the power and far too much was heard by my children.

I tried to look up the contact information for the radio station and my server will not allow access because the content of the radio station is considered inappropriate by my Department.

What mechanism is there to ensure that inappropriate content is not aired without warning to parents of children who only want to listen to that radio station, other than me turning off the power when I am offended by what I (and my children) hear?

Broadcaster Response

The station responded on May 11:

I have received your letter and have reviewed the segment from the morning show that you make reference to. We do not make a habit of warning our audience about questionable

topics as the show is unscripted and many of the comments are 'off the cuff' as was the case with this particular topic.

Our target demographic is females 25 to 34, and, as a result, our conversations are often considered inappropriate for younger listeners.

Thank you for your feedback; I will be sharing it with Mauler, Rush, and Jenni as well.

Additional Correspondence

The complainant replied to the station on May 12:

Target demographic aside, there are broadcast standards for a reason, and there is a code of ethics in place. I assert that the program in question contravened the standards and all I was looking for is some mechanism to allow those that are concerned to take measures to prevent children from being exposed to adult content.

Since the program is scheduled before the watershed hour, it would seem to me that the program directors should be required to advise listeners that the topic they are about to discuss may contain material that is inappropriate for some members of the audience. Even programming that occurs after the watershed hour carries such a warning.

Having planned to discuss a television program that dealt with orgasm, I find it offensive that you hide behind a defense of "unscripted" programming and "off the cuff" remarks. If your station has the sense to issue a warning before playing Britney Spears' "If You Seek Amy", I fail to comprehend why you can't air the same warning prior to engaging in unscripted banter about topics that involve sexuality at 7:40 in the morning.

What you have done by responding in a completely disenfranchised manner with no concern related to the justifiable objection of a listener to content that is clearly inappropriate for young listeners, is guarantee that your audience will shrink by, as a minimum, one family.

This reply to you will most certainly be followed by a ruling request to the CBSC to determine if I am correct in my assertion that your discussion contravened accepted standards in Canadian broadcasting.

The complainant also filed his Ruling Request on May 12, attaching the above letter he sent to the station:

Attached is my response to the radio station, which was copied to [the CBSC], and I include here for completeness.

The broadcaster essentially ignored my concern, and I would like to know if the content should have been preceded by a warning, which would have allowed me to prevent my children from hearing the content in question.

Target demographic aside, there are broadcast standards for a reason, and there is a code of ethics in place. I assert that the program in question contravened the standards and all I was looking for is some mechanism to allow those that are concerned to take measures to prevent children from being exposed to adult content.

Since the program is scheduled before the watershed hour, it would seem to me that the program directors should be required to advise listeners that the topic they are about to discuss may contain material that is inappropriate for some members of the audience. Even programming that occurs after the watershed hour carries such a warning.

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