

broadcasting  
standards  
*commission*

*the* **bulletin**

**No33**

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As an independent organisation, the Broadcasting Standards Commission considers the portrayal of violence, sexual conduct and matters of taste and decency in television and radio programmes and advertisements. It also provides redress for people who believe they have been unfairly treated or subjected to an unwarranted infringement of privacy.

### **Complaints about standards and fairness**

To consider and adjudicate on complaints the Commission has the power to:

- require recordings of broadcast material;
- call for written statements;
- hold hearings about the detail of what has been broadcast.

All the Commission's decisions are reported in this regular bulletin. An on-line version is available on [www.bsc.org.uk](http://www.bsc.org.uk)

The Commission can also require broadcasters to publish summaries of its decisions either on-air or in a newspaper or magazine and report on any action they might have taken as a result.

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#### *The Commissioners*

Rt. Hon. The Lord Holme of Cheltenham, CBE (*Chairman*)

Jane Leighton (*Deputy Chairman*)

The Lady Warner (*Deputy Chairman*)

David Boulton

Dame Fiona Caldicott DBE

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# fairness

Complaints about unjust or unfair treatment can only be made by participants in programmes who were the subject of the treatment or by those who had a direct interest in the treatment's subject matter. Complaints of unwarranted infringement can only be made by those whose privacy was infringed. In considering the facts of the case, the Commission always studies written exchanges of evidence and usually holds a hearing with both the complainant and the broadcasters present.

**Copies of full adjudications on all the following complaints - whether upheld or not - are available from The Broadcasting Standards Commission, 7 The Sanctuary, London SW1P 3JS. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. Alternatively you can email your request to [adj@bsc.org.uk](mailto:adj@bsc.org.uk)**

## Upheld complaints

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### Close Up North: Dying to get There

BBC2, 23 September 1999

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The Broadcasting Standards Commission has upheld in part a complaint of unwarranted infringement of privacy from Mr Michael Byrne about Close Up North: Dying to get There, broadcast by BBC 2 on 23 September 1999. The programme, about the high number of fatal road traffic accidents in Lincolnshire, included footage of the aftermath of a motorcycle accident, including shots of Mr Byrne receiving medical attention for his injuries.

The Commission recognised the difficulty faced by the programme-makers in gaining informed consent from victims at accident scenes. In the circumstances of this case, the Commission found that the filming of Mr Byrne receiving medical treatment had amounted to an infringement of his privacy, but as he had been unaware that he was being filmed and there was no suggestion that the filming had hindered his treatment, it found that the infringement had not been unwarranted in the making of the programme.

The Commission considered that Mr Byrne was clearly identifiable in the programme. It attached considerable weight in its findings to this element of the complaint and considered that the programme-makers could have avoided identifying him, particularly since they were aware that he had clearly expressed his wish not to participate in the programme. The Commission found that, while the programme was justified in drawing attention to the issues of road safety, there was no overriding public interest to justify infringing Mr Byrne's privacy. It therefore found that there was an unwarranted infringement of his privacy in the broadcasting of the footage.

Accordingly, the complaint was upheld in part.

*Upheld in part*

# Statement

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## Regional News Bulletin

BBC Radio Suffolk, 28 May 1999, 1 June 1999 and 19 June 1999

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The Commission has upheld in part complaints of unjust or unfair treatment and unwarranted infringement of privacy in items on Regional News Bulletins, broadcast by BBC Radio Suffolk on 28 May, 1 and 19 June 1999.

## Not upheld complaints

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<i>Broadcast</i>	<i>Programme</i>	<i>Date of complaint/Complainant</i>	<i>Nature of complaint</i>
14.10.99 Channel 4	<b>Tony's People</b>	8.11.99 Mr Rod Baker	Unjust or unfair treatment and unwarranted infringement of privacy
26.7.99 Carlton Television	<b>London Today</b>	9.11.99 Hartwell Plc	Unjust or unfair treatment
29.8.99 BBC Radio 5 Live	<b>Buy Buy Baby</b>	11.10.99 Ms X	Unjust or unfair treatment

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# standards

Complaints about standards (violence, sex, or issues of taste and decency such as bad language or the treatment of disasters) can be made by anyone who has seen or heard the broadcast. In reaching a decision to uphold or not uphold a complaint, the code and research into public attitudes are considered alongside the material and its context. In certain circumstances the Commission may also hold a hearing. Standards complaints are considered by a Standards Panel in the first instance, and can be referred to the Standards Committee.

## Upheld complaints

### **Top Tens: One Hit Wonders**

Channel 4, 22 January 2000, 2100-2230

#### *The Complaint*

A viewer complained about bad language.

#### *The Broadcaster's Statement*

Channel 4 explained that the programme was one in a series of top ten themed entertainment music programmes, examining the different music genres and the artists behind the music. The programme focused on the groups which have been successful only briefly because of the chart success of one song. Amongst others, it featured Doctor and the Medics, and when one of that group used the phrase "a bunch of old cunts" he was using it in an affectionate, humorous and self-deprecating manner. It was intended to be descriptive of himself and his band, and was not used aggressively or in an abusive manner. Channel 4 added that the programme was preceded with a clear and unambiguous warning that it contained very strong language, and the language was used over an hour after the Watershed.

#### *The Commission's Finding*

The full Commission viewed the programme and noted the item in question. It also took into account the findings of its research into bad language, which indicated that the word in question was one of the highest in terms of causing greatest offence. In the Commission's view, although the word was not used aggressively, there was no dramatic or compelling justification for its use in the particular context. The complaint was upheld.

*Upheld*

CN 4079

### **Aircraft Emergencies**

ITV, 14 February 2000, 2200-2300

#### *The Complaint*

Twelve viewers complained about the sensationalist treatment of aircraft tragedies and the use of death for entertainment.

#### *The Broadcaster's Statement*

LWT said that this documentary programme set out to examine those few instances where aircraft had crashed. As was pointed out, although safety standards have never been higher, there were still four main areas of danger in air travel: technical failure, pilot error, weather conditions and terrorism. Much of the footage had been shown before, none was particularly recent. Nor did it show close ups of the crashes or the victims.

The broadcaster went on to say that the treatment had been factual and that they hoped viewers would gain some understanding of what can go wrong and the efforts being made to reduce accidents.

#### *The Commission's Finding*

The Standards Committee watched the programme. It took the view that the repeated use of footage of air crashes which had resulted in serious injury and death, coupled with the dramatic nature of its presentation by the use of music and slow motion, combined to leave the viewer as voyeur. It noted that a number of the complainants knew people involved in the actual crashes featured. It concluded that the programme could only have added to their distress and had shown insufficient respect for the victims of tragedy. The complaints were upheld.

*Upheld*

CN 4267.12

## WWF - WCW

Sky One 4 December 1999, 1100-1300, Channel 4, 23 January 2000, 0100-0405, 6 February 2000, 1600-1700, 5 March 2000, 1600-1655, Channel 5, 28 January 2000, 1900-2000, 11 February 2000, 1900-2000, 31 March 2000, 1900-2005

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### *The Complaints*

The Commission received a number of complaints about this programming, across a variety of channels. The Sky One transmission attracted one complaint, the Channel 4 programmes eight complaints, mainly about the 23/01/00 transmission and the Channel 5 coverage drew five complaints. Almost all concerned the depiction of violence both inside and outside the ring and the use of props. Other matters concerned nudity and tasteless content. Of particular concern to some complainants was the heavy trailing for the late-night 'Royal Rumble', within a pre-Watershed Channel 4 edition, which they felt did not accurately reflect the level of violence contained in the programme. This included the use of highly realistic looking props such as a baseball bat wrapped in barbed wire which, for all intents, appeared to inflict serious injury on the contestant.

### *The Broadcaster's Statement*

BskyB said that its programme was similar to many others it had transmitted at this time. All were viewed by an experienced editor prior to transmission to ensure that they were suitable for children.

Channel 4 said that, whilst this style of wrestling was relatively new on the channel, it had been transmitted in the UK for some time, gaining a well-defined reputation and a significant following of fans. 'WWF' depicts what was clearly staged and carefully choreographed 'comic book' style violence. There was no serious pretence made by the organisers that the wrestling was real or spontaneous - it was self-evidently not. The people involved were trained to perform such stunts and the comic and absurd elements prevailing throughout the events were consistent with the bizarre, soap opera style storylines involving the characters.

With regard to the 'Royal Rumble', Channel 4 said that, notwithstanding the fact that the violence was clearly staged, it considered it appropriate to schedule the live coverage of this event significantly after the Watershed. The content of the programme was appropriate to its very late slot and the material was notably less realistic than many other programmes transmitted at that hour in the UK.

Channel 4 noted that there was concern that references in a preceding pre-Watershed programme had encouraged young people to view the 'Royal Rumble'. It said that this raised questions about the degree to which viewers, particularly parents, understood the Watershed, and were able and willing to take steps to monitor their children's viewing late at night. The programme was suitable for transmission at 1am and the broadcaster believed that pre-9pm cross-reference to or promotion of post-Watershed programmes was acceptable, subject to the reference or promotion itself being acceptable for its own time of transmission.

The pre-Watershed programmes were pre-recorded bouts and were specifically edited for transmission during family viewing time.

Channel 5 said that this series of World Championship Wrestling was proving to be extremely popular amongst young viewers, and continued a long tradition of coverage of this sport on prime-time television. The loud and lurid American format in this instance was, if anything, even less convincing than more traditional bouts. The protagonists dress and behave according to their various stage personae, entering the arena amongst showers of pyrotechnics and doing battle in a highly stylised way. Many of them employed individual stunts and gimmicks. In addition to their banners and costumes, several of the characters enter the ring with props ranging from guitars to police night-sticks, made from balsa wood or foam rubber.

In the programme of 29/01/00, Channel 5 said that the 'baseball bats' were made of plastic and that the impact of blows had 'batman-style' KERRRPOW!!! and BONNNNK!!! superimposed over them. Given these half-hearted attempts at suspension of disbelief, together with the carnival atmosphere of the arena and the light-hearted commentary, the broadcaster doubted that such scenes would be taken seriously by the majority of viewers.

*The Commission's Finding*

These programmes were considered by the full Commission. Members acknowledged that, superficially, this style of programming was violence presented as pantomime with larger than life characters and outlandish plots. The Commission took the view that children would accept the genre as fanciful, skilful, make-believe, although it was concerned about the use of authentic looking props, some of which were items to which many children would have access.

Whilst it considered that some of the early evening programmes strayed close to the edge of acceptability, the Commission felt that they were unlikely to have exceeded the expectations of many among the audience, for the reasons given above. These complaints were not upheld.

However, it was troubled by the repeated encouragement given to young people to watch the late night 'Royal Rumble'. Whilst this was billed as a live event, there

seemed to be little explanation offered that it was suitable only for late night transmission, whether it was live or not. The Commission acknowledged the role of parental responsibility but, given the mixed messages in the trails placed within the early evening edition and the lack of a clear indication that 'Royal Rumble' was of a different order to the pre-Watershed programmes, it felt that children had been inappropriately directed towards the late night edition, given the relative realism and severity of the violence. The Commission upheld that aspect of the complaints.

*Upheld in part*

CN 3931, 4122.4, 4134, 4173, 4211, 4249, 4283.2, 4429.2, 4619

## Not upheld complaints

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**Chris Tarrant**

Capital Radio 95.8 FM, 17 March 2000, 0600-1000

*The Complaint*

A listener complained about inappropriate remarks about Myra Hindley.

*The Broadcaster's Statement*

Capital Radio said that any offence caused by the comments had not been intentional. They said the presenter's comments had been off the cuff, in response to the preceding news piece and had sought to report on the bizarre nature of the case.

*The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel listened to the programme, noting remarks about the sort of punishment which, in the presenter's opinion, Myra Hindley might deserve. The Panel took the view that while the remarks were not to everyone's taste, they had alluded to a recent news story, were a personal view and were unlikely to have caused offence to the majority of the audience. The complaint was not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4539

**To the Ends of the Earth:  
Revenge of the Lost Tribe**

Channel 4, 21 February 2000, 2000- 2100

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*The Complaint*

Two viewers complained about the use of language inappropriate for the time of transmission.

*The Broadcaster's Statement*

Channel 4 said that this was an adventure documentary series. This edition followed a team of post-graduate students as they attempted to pursue a research project with an indigenous Amazonian tribe. The programme faithfully followed the setbacks and successes of the students as they attempted to overcome their own preconceptions. Strong language was used by the students when under pressure, in particular when they encountered hostile Indians and one of them was wounded.

*The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel watched the documentary noting the edited use of the 'f-word'. It took the view that although rated as severe according to the Commission's own research, the language was used in moments of extreme stress. The Panel considered that, in the context of the situation, the language, which was bleeped, would not have exceeded the expectations of the majority of the audience. The complaints were not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4336/4345

**Mark Radcliffe**

BBC Radio 1, 25 February 2000, 1400-1600

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*The Complaint*

A listener complained about offensive remarks which were inappropriate for the time of transmission.

*The Broadcaster's Statement*

The BBC said that Mark Radcliffe's spoof DJ, Fat Harry White relied on the double entendre and innuendo which has been an established element of British humour for centuries.

**Bruiser**

BBC 2, 28 February 2000, 2320-2350

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*The Complaint*

Two viewers complained about different aspects of this comedy programme. One complained about bad language and a tasteless joke about the death of Rod Hull; the other about a sketch in which a baby was apparently crushed to death.

*The Broadcaster's Statement*

The BBC said that this was the first programme in a new series of sketch shows, shown more than two hours after the Watershed. A pre-transmission announcement had referred to content which was 'saucy, crude, and a little bizarre'. In the thirty sketches which followed, the unexpected and the improbable were the sources of comedy.

The broadcaster realised that the humour would not appeal to all tastes. But the humour of the baby sketch was based on its implausibility. There was no canned laughter.

*The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel watched the programme noting the items complained of. It took the view that although the humour would not have been to everyone's taste the elements of farce and implausibility robbed the material of significant offence. The Panel also concluded that the use of bad language had not exceeded acceptable boundaries for a comedy programme broadcast late at night on a minority channel. The complaints were not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4417.2

*The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel listened to the programme noting the feature complained of. It took the view that in the context of a well-established slot within the show, and noting that radio has no Watershed, the remarks concerning a well-known performer, although not of universal appeal, would not have caused offence to the majority of the audience. The complaint was not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4490

**The 11 o'Clock Show**

Channel 4, 8 March 2000, 2305-2335

*The Complaint*

Two viewers complained about offensive remarks.

*The Broadcaster's Statement*

Channel 4 said that the programme was written, performed and edited on the day of transmission, and covered the day's news in a sharp and satirical manner. Given the innovative nature and format of the programme, it could be risqué and provocative, but did not intend deliberately to cause offence.

The broadcaster explained that the presenter's remark about Ronald Reagan had been intended to humorously compare George Bush Junior's drug use to senility. It was George Bush Junior's credibility, as a presidential candidate, that the programme-makers had wanted to call into question, not those who suffer from Alzheimer's disease, or their families.

Channel 4 went on to say that the reporter's comments concerning BSE and the homeless had been based on stories that had hit the headlines on that day. The reporter's style was a caricature in which he took a tabloid approach to the news and exaggerated it for comic effect. The broadcaster said that the comments were not intended to be taken seriously and regretted that it had caused offence to a family that had suffered loss through new variant CJD.

*The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel watched this edition of the topical, satirical series and noted the comments complained of. It recognised the possible impact of the remarks to people with personal experience of the illness mentioned, but considered that while the jokes would not have been to everyone's taste, they were unlikely to have caused offence to the majority of the audience to this well-established satirical programme broadcast late at night on a minority channel. The complaints were not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4509.2

**The Brit Awards 2000**

ITV, 4 March 2000, 2055-2255

*The Complaint*

Fifteen viewers complained about this awards ceremony. The complaints included the use of bad language by various celebrities, a sexually offensive set and performance by Geri Halliwell, a lack of respect for the National Anthem, homosexual innuendo and references to underage sex and strip football.

*The Broadcaster's Statement*

Carlton Television explained that the Brit Awards were seen as both a review and a celebration of British pop music, with an established track record for occasional bad behaviour. There was a clear announcement about bad language at the start of the programme. Shows in previous years had started well within family viewing time but this year's broadcast began shortly before the 9.00pm Watershed.

The broadcaster went on to say that it took into account the programme's history and the list of celebrities who were to appear. It considered the overall content was justifiable in terms of audience expectation, particularly combined with advance publicity and the pre-broadcast announcement. Overall, it anticipated that few viewers would expect model behaviour at this awards ceremony and that, for the purposes of taste and decency, the live performance was adequately curtailed in editing for the purposes of this broadcast.

*The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Committee watched the awards ceremony. It took the view that, whilst the use of bad language by various artists was unfortunate, in the context of a live programme, the presenters had done everything possible to minimise any potential offence. The Panel believed that the dance routine by Geri Halliwell and the set she had used had gone no further than many other contemporary performances. It also noted the playing of the National Anthem accompanying the arrival on stage of a member of the cast of the comedy series, *The Royle Family*. It considered that no disrespect was intended. The Panel took the view that the homosexual innuendo and references to underage sex and strip football had not gone beyond acceptable boundaries. In conclusion, the Panel believed that the content of the programme, preceded by a warning about strong language, would not have exceeded the expectations of the majority of the audience. The complaints were not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4424/4438.14

### Focus North

Channel 4, 2 March 2000, 0035-0110

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#### *The Complaint*

A viewer complained about content offensive to the relatives of the dead.

#### *The Broadcaster's Statement*

Channel 4 said that the programme was a parody of a regional news programme. The episode complained of was the second of the second series and so the style of the programme would have been familiar to the majority of its viewers. The episode was also preceded with an announcement, leaving viewers in no doubt about the nature of the programme.

The sketch complained of, filmed in a cemetery, was pure satire and in keeping with the programme and the series generally. Dead people were not the butt of the joke; rather, the aim of the sketch was to 'send up' land developers, the local councils who indulge them and the way in which some regional news programmes pander to both.

Channel 4 said that to minimise offence, the programme-makers obtained the full consent, in advance, from the charity that owned the cemetery and filmed in such a way that no names on gravestones were visible and no particularly distinctive graves were shown.

#### *The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel watched this edition of the series and noted that the cemetery and the graves had been filmed discreetly. It considered that while the sketch would not have been to everyone's taste, it was unlikely to have caused offence to the majority of the audience to this satirical programme broadcast late at night on a minority channel. The complaint was not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4431

### Goodness Gracious Me

BBC2, 24 March 2000, 2100-2130

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#### *The Complaint*

Two viewers complained about this programme. One considered a sketch to be racist, whilst the other objected to a mockery of Christianity.

#### *The Broadcaster's Statement*

The BBC said that much of the humour in this series arose from misunderstandings and incongruities that could occur when cultures met. The couples who appeared in this sketch regularly made their comic impact from their misunderstanding of the traditions that they aspire to be part of and their farcical attempts to 'belong'. This time, the humour arose from the characters' determination to ignore the stereotypical racism on the part of their hosts until threatened with one of the most drastic expressions of racist violence.

The sketch did not imply that racist attacks were funny. The form of violence with which the couples were threatened bore no relation to events in this country and this element of exaggeration clearly distanced the sketch. It was the attitudes of some members of both the Asian and rural English communities that were the object of humour. The brief 'prayer of thanksgiving', as the characters made their escape, was not intended to poke fun at Christianity.

#### *The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel watched this edition of the comedy series. It noted that such humour could sometimes be open to misunderstanding, but considered that, in the context of this established series, the sketch involving the well-known characters was unlikely to have exceeded the expectations of the majority of the audience. The complaints were not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4589.2

**East Midlands Today**

BBC1, 29 February 2000, 1830-1900

*The Complaint*

A viewer complained about the use of footage of drug taking in a news report.

*The Broadcaster's Statement*

The BBC said that the report had concerned the conviction of a former head of a Crack Awareness team who had himself been found to be dealing in drugs. The accompanying footage, which had been brief and had given no indication of the substances involved, or the methods of their preparation, had been taken from the local health authority's video on drug abuse. The use of strange-looking equipment in gloomy surroundings, and of a hypodermic needle, had conveyed an impression of desperation rather than glamour.

The broadcaster believed that it had been right for the programme to remind viewers of the serious nature of the conviction in a way suitable for the time of transmission.

*The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel watched the report. It considered that, in the context of a serious report, the use of footage which was neither gratuitous nor detailed had not exceeded acceptable boundaries for the time of transmission. The complaint was not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4511

**Simon Mayo**

BBC Radio 1, 9 March 2000, 0900-1200

*The Complaint*

A listener complained about sexually suggestive lyrics broadcast at a time when young children could be listening.

*The Broadcaster's Statement.*

The BBC said that the Simon Mayo audience does not include a significant amount of children. The lyrics of the song were primarily suggestive rather than explicit, and while there might be contexts in which their unexpurgated broadcast would be inappropriate, they did not believe it was unsuitable for Simon Mayo's listeners.

**Jack Dee's Full Mountie**

BBC1, 7 March 2000, 2250-2320

*The Complaint*

A viewer complained about racist remarks.

*The Broadcaster's Statement*

The BBC explained that the term "nigger" had been used in the programme. The use of the term by some black Americans corresponded to the adoption of "queer" by gay rights groups. In both cases, a term used in a derogatory sense had been transformed by the group on the receiving end of the abuse into a defiant assertion of identity. The programme showed how some black comedians make use of this development in their acts. Mark Thomas' use of the term followed an extract from a performance by George Wallace, and the British comedian was referring to an aspect of his American counterpart's act in terms which Mr. Wallace might well have used himself.

*The Commission's Finding*

The Standards Committee viewed the programme and noted the item complained about. It considered that the word in question had not been used in any racist sense, but to describe how it might be used in an American comedian's routine. The Committee took the view that, in this context, the use of the term was not likely to have caused widespread offence. The complaint was not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4520

*The Commission's Finding*

A Standards Panel listened to the programme noting the lyrics of the song 'The Bad Touch' by the Bloodhound Gang. It noted the fact that there was no Watershed for radio and took the view that the nature of the song had not gone beyond acceptable boundaries for the time of transmission, broadcast in a programme aimed at adults. The complaint was not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4514

## **Modern Times**

BBC2, 1 March 2000, 2100-2150

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### *The Complaint*

A viewer complained about the offence caused by the coverage given to the case of Myra Hindley.

### *The Broadcaster's Statement*

The BBC explained that the purpose of the programme, based on correspondence between Myra Hindley and the reporter, was to inform the debate about what should happen to her. It did not take sides; her account of events was punctuated with cautionary comments. Nor did the programme seek to mitigate the horror of what she had done. Her own voice was heard three times, to make clear how communication had been established between her and the reporter. The extracts from her letters were read by an actress.

The BBC added that the programme was prefaced by a clear introduction about its contents to avoid

catching unawares those to whom any discussion of the case was offensive.

### *The Commission's Finding*

The Standards Committee viewed the programme, which it considered had covered an issue of legitimate public interest. It acknowledged that the subject matter was capable of provoking strong feelings, but it took the view that it had been handled seriously and sensitively in the programme. In these circumstances, and in view of the preceding warning, it considered that the content of the programme was unlikely to have exceeded the expectations of the majority of the audience. The complaint was not upheld.

*Not upheld*

CN 4449

# Resolved complaints

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In the following cases the Commission decided that the broadcaster's acknowledgement of error, and subsequent remedial action was sufficient for the Commission to consider that redress for the complainant had been achieved and consequently that it was inappropriate to proceed further.

## **Chris Evans' Breakfast Show**

Virgin Radio, 4 February 2000, 0630-0930

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A listener complained about a sexual conversation which was inappropriate for the time of transmission. Virgin Radio said that it was surprised by the comments made by members of the on-air team. The show had a well-established irreverent style and was targeted at a 25+ audience, but it accepted that the topic was broadcast at a time when younger, more easily influenced people could be listening. It had been made clear to those involved that the conversation had transgressed acceptable levels and that any repeat would warrant immediate disciplinary action.

### Outcome

The Commission listened to the programme, noting the broadcaster's acknowledgement of error and the subsequent action taken. It considered that in the light of this response it was inappropriate to proceed further with this complaint.

CN 4318

## **George Bowie**

Radio Clyde, 20 March 2000, 0905

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Two listeners complained about the sexual lyrics of a song which were inappropriate for the time of transmission. Radio Clyde said that although the record by the 'Bloodhound Gang' was extremely popular, having reviewed the nature of the lyrics it had produced a remix. The original version would not be played again by the station.

### Outcome

The Commission listened to the record, noting the broadcaster's response and the subsequent action taken. It considered that in the light of this response it was inappropriate to proceed further with these complaints.

CN 4579.2

## **The Big Breakfast**

Channel 4, 15 February 2000, 0700-0900

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A viewer complained about the use of sexual language she regarded as inappropriate for the time of transmission. Channel 4 said that the remarks had taken place in the context of a live programme for which there were clear rules about bad language. In this case, an actress had used the word 'shag' in a playful context and had not appreciated its capacity to offend. An apology was made on air. There were no explicit sexual references.

### Outcome

A Standards Panel watched the programme, noting the broadcaster's recognition of the problem. In view of the prompt response, the Panel considered it was inappropriate to proceed with further consideration of this complaint.

CN 4354

### The Morning Crew

Chiltern 96.9 FM, 21 February 2000, 0600-0900

A listener complained about the presenters' comments, which appeared to endorse and encourage theft. Chiltern FM said that the presenters had overstepped the mark on this occasion and that the material had not been representative of their usual behaviour. The station said it took matters like this seriously and that the presenters had been reprimanded for their actions.

#### Outcome

The Commission listened to the programme. It took into account the broadcaster's action, and considered that, in the light of the response, it was inappropriate to proceed further with this complaint. CN 4357

### Keith Arthur: Fisherman's Blues

Talk Sport, 26.2.00, 0600-0700

A listener complained about a caller's racist comment. Talk Sport said that the offending comment had regrettably gone to air by mistake. The incident had prompted an immediate review of the station's procedures for dealing with offensive callers, with which all presenters, producers and technical operators were now familiar. They apologised for the incident, and said that extensive measures were in place to avoid a repetition.

#### Outcome

The Commission listened to the programme. It took into account the broadcaster's apology and the subsequent action taken. It took the view that in the light of the response, it was inappropriate to proceed further with this complaint. CN 4493

The complaints summarised below were not upheld and no statement was required from the broadcaster. Complaints may not be upheld because the content was considered likely to be within the expectations of the audience for the type of programme; or the programme was appropriately labelled or scheduled, or the content was deemed acceptable within the context in which it was broadcast.

CN 4179	<b>Channel 4 News</b> frightening imagery	Channel 4	31.01.00	1900
CN 4192	<b>Teletext</b> offensive content	ITV	03.02.00	0915
CN 4242	<b>Five Squeazy Pieces</b> tasteless content	BBC R4	01.02.00	2300
CN 4393	<b>Love Bites</b> sexual content	BBC2	26.02.00	1230
CN 4455	<b>Littlejohn's 6-0-6</b> sexual innuendo	BBC R5 Live	04.03.00	1800
CN 4463	<b>Top of the Pops</b> violent and sexual content	BBC1	03.03.00	1930
CN 4484	<b>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</b> violent content	BBC2	09.03.00	1845
CN 4497	<b>Newsnight</b> violent content	BBC2	06.03.00	2230

CN 4513	<b>Blink</b> bad language	Channel 4	05.03.00	2200
CN 4522	<b>Trespass</b> bad language and violent content	BBC2	04.03.00	2330
CN 4523	<b>Shaft</b> racist content	BBC2	04.03.00	2055
CN 4524	<b>Ayia Nappa: Fantasy Island</b> sexual content	Channel 4	07.01.00	2340
CN 4545	<b>White Tribe</b> racist content	Channel 4	27.01.00	2100
CN 4552	<b>Six Experiments that changed the World</b> bad language	Channel 4	12.04.00	1900
CN 4554	<b>Newsround Extra</b> sexual content	BBC1	10.03.00	1655
CN 4555	<b>Even Further Abroad</b> inappropriate nudity	BBC2	18.03.00	1655
CN 4565/ 4573	<b>The Simpsons</b> frightening scenes	BBC2	10.03.00	1800
CN 4568	<b>Trust Me I'm a Doctor</b> tasteless content	BBC2	22.03.00	1930
CN 4569	<b>Today</b> tasteless content	BBC R4	21.03.00	0600
CN 4582	<b>Correspondent</b> inappropriate violent content	BBC2	25.03.00	1850
CN 4585	<b>The Jerry Springer Show</b> distasteful content	ITV	27.03.00	0925
CN 4587	<b>Jonathon Ross</b> sexual content	BBC R2	18.03.00	1000
CN 4590	<b>Montel</b> inappropriate sexual content	Channel 4	20.03.00	1655
CN 4595/ 4596	<b>Monsignor Renard</b> bad language and sexual content	ITV	27.03.00	2100
CN 4612	<b>Da Ali G Show</b> offensive remarks and substance abuse	Channel 4	01.04.00	2230
CN 4616	<b>Home Farm Twins</b> frightening scenes	BBC1	30.03.00	1620
CN 4617	<b>Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)</b> frightening scenes	BBC1	01.04.00	2055
CN 4620	<b>Top Tens: Eurovision</b> offensive remarks	Channel 4	25.03.00	2055

## Complaints concerning standards

CN 4621	<b>Love is the Devil</b> sexual content	BBC2	26.03.00	2100
CN 4625	<b>Mark Radcliffe</b> bad language and sexual innuendo	BBC R1	29.03.00	1400
CN 4626	<b>Goodbye to the Nineties</b> sexual content	BBC2	01.04.00	2100
CN 4627	<b>This Morning</b> sexual content	ITV	30.03.00	1030
CN 4655	<b>The Last Musketeer</b> sexual content	ITV	26.03.00	2100
CN 4656	<b>Even Further Abroad</b> religious offence	BBC2	01.04.00	1630
CN 4657	<b>Greece Uncovered</b> tasteless content	Channel 4	24.03.00	2310
CN 4660	<b>Newsround</b> inappropriate language	BBC1	06.03.00	1700
CN 4666	<b>Dirty Work</b> inappropriate language	BBC1	12.04.00	2135
CN 4668	<b>It's a Mystery</b> frightening scenes	ITV	10.04.00	1615
CN 4670	<b>The 11 o'Clock Show</b> tasteless remarks	Channel 4	06.04.00	2305
CN 4678	<b>White Tribe Debate</b> racist content	Channel 4	27.01.00	2100
CN 4684	<b>Top of the Pops</b> sexual content	BBC1	21.04.00	1930
CN 4686	<b>David Mellor</b> offensive comments	BBC R5 Live	19.04.00	2200
CN 4687	<b>BBC News</b> animal cruelty	BBC1	20.04.00	2100
CN 4691	<b>Have I Got News For You</b> nudity	BBC2	14.04.00	2100
CN 4692	<b>The Jerry Springer Show</b> inappropriate sexual content	ITV	18.04.00	0925
CN 4700	<b>Newsnight</b> racist content	BBC2	11.04.00	2230
CN 4701	<b>Feeling Minnesota</b> sexual content	BBC2	25.03.00	2300
CN 4703	<b>The Jerry Springer Show</b> inappropriate sexual content	ITV	10.04.00	0925
CN 4706	<b>PM</b> animal cruelty	BBC R4	20.04.00	1700

CN 4707	<b>TV'S Naughtiest Blunders</b> bad language and nudity	ITV	19.04.00	2200
CN 4720	<b>Cor, Blimey</b> bad language and sexual content	ITV	24.04.00	2100
CN 4723	<b>Top Ten Comedy Records</b> religious offence	Channel 4	22.04.00	2115
CN 4729	<b>Hearts and Bones</b> sexual content	BBC1	30.04.00	2120
CN 4730	<b>Animals Do The Funniest Things 2</b> animal cruelty	BBC1	21.04.00	1830
CN 4739	<b>The Other Side</b> nudity	Channel 4	21.04.00	0250
CN 4744	<b>Casino</b> violent content	S4C	23.04.00	2220
CN 4756	<b>The Adventures of Lano and Woodley</b> religious offence	BBC2	30.04.00	1300
CN 4758	<b>Dawson's Creek</b> sexual content	Channel 4	23.04.00	1240
CN 4761	<b>Bits</b> animal cruelty	Channel 4	30.04.00	1000
CN 4764	<b>History Zone: One Foot Past in the Past</b> sexual content	BBC2	22.04.00	1935
CN 4769	<b>They Think Its All Over</b> offensive comments	BBC1	04.05.00	2130

# Publications

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| 2. The Provision of Children's Television in Britain: 1992-1996<br>Maire Messenger Davies/Beth Corbett; 1997              | 1-872521-28-5 | £20.00 |
| 3. Bad Language - What are the Limits?<br>Andrea Millwood Hargrave; 1998  | 1-872521-29-3 | £12.00 |
| 4. Men Viewing Violence<br>Stirling Media Research Institute and<br>Violence Research Centre, Manchester University; 1998 | 1-872521-33-9 | £15.00 |
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