

~~CENSORED~~

# NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

# NCROPA

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The N.C.R.O.P.A. is affiliated to the National Council for Civil Liberties

NO/DAW/DP

5th November 1989

Michael Checkland, Esq.,  
Director General,  
British Broadcasting Corporation,  
Broadcasting House,  
London,  
W1A 1AA.

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*John H. Checkland,*

I have just watched the transmission of the programme entitled "Cross Channel Sex" in the BBC1 "Heart of the Matter" series, and, on behalf of the National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts (NCROPA), write to express my undisguised outrage at what I can only describe as one of the most biased examples of television journalism I have ever viewed.

What purported to be a documentary style programme, interspersed with discussion and comment about the pros and cons of transmitting so-called "pornography" on television, with regard to broadcasting deregulation, the arrival of satellite TV and the beaming of sexually explicit programmes, already freely available in other European countries, to television receivers in this country, was, in fact, nothing more than a blatantly feminist-extremist piece of anti-'porn'/pro-censorship propaganda.

There was virtually no attempt to present opposing, differing views with any semblance of balance and, as the foremost U.K. anti-censorship organisation campaigning specifically on this and other directly related issues, the NCROPA is absolutely astonished, and angered, that no-one from this organisation was invited to appear in the programme, or consulted, or even approached for a comment.

Over the past thirteen and a half years, during which the NCROPA has been in existence, we have had endless cause to make representations to the BBC about the flagrant bias and gross imbalance of reporting on this issue in its programmes and have written to successive Directors-General on a number of occasions to complain, as well as, of course, to many individual programme producers and directors themselves. It has all been to no avail and the imbalance not only continues, but in creases. Tonight's "Heart of the Matter" programme has demonstrated that beyond any shadow of doubt.

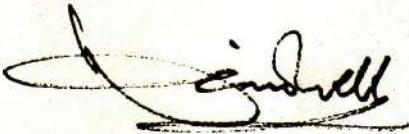
Under the terms of its Royal Charter, the BBC quite clearly has an obligation to produce programmes of balance and with due impartiality. It is just as clearly

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not fulfilling that obligation in programmes covering this subject and, on behalf of the NCROPA, therefore, I ask you to investigate this very serious matter, insist that those who are responsible for perpetrating these improprieties are severely reprimanded, and ensure that, in future, they conform to the proper standards of programme-making demanded by the BBC Charter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Webb', with a large, sweeping initial 'D'.

David Webb,  
Honorary Director,  
National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts