

02-277

Stephanie Kost

From: Deb & Dan [deb.andan@verizon.net]
Sent: Thursday, August 05, 2004 10:33 AM
To: Michael Powell
Cc: Kathleen Abernathy; KJMWEB; Jonathan Adelstein; Michael Copps
Subject: RE: URGENT Citizen Concern Over Media Monopoly

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Mr. Michael Powell,

I am VERY concerned over the increasing monopolization of our media airwaves. It is more apparent that the corporate voices of the few DO NOT represent the voices of the American public. And last time I looked, our airwaves were owned by the public. I am most highly concerned with Clear Channel and Fox Broadcasting. It is ever so apparent that there is blatant disregard for keeping the media airwaves in the public concern. The FCC MUST intervene and speak on behalf of the people. The airwaves exist for Americans to get information and news so that we can engage in a dialogue about our cherished democracy. We are not getting the information. It is biased and specifically, in the case of FOX News, should not at all be called "news." It is pure opinion and the viewpoint of one ideology. Something must be done about this monopolization of media. Would that we still had the Fairness Doctrine -- for then we would have a diversity of information. Today, we have none of that. And it saddens me greatly to see one of our rights trampled upon. Please urge the FCC and its members to look beyond the concerns of media corporate interests. Let's get back to representing the American people once again.

Sincerely,

Deborah Lacusta
712 San Lorenzo St.
Santa Monica, CA 90402
deb.andan@verizon.net

cc: Sen. Barbara Boxer, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Rep. Henry Waxman, Pres. George Bush

No. of Copies rec'd _____
Listed as _____
150 Letters

Stephanie Kost

From: Dara Coan [dara_lc@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, August 13, 2004 9:33 PM
To: Michael Powell; Kathleen Abernathy; Michael Copps; KJMWEB; Jonathan Adelstein
Subject: BRING BACK CHOICE

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my extreme disappointment at the FCC's gigantic failure to take any action to fulfill the goals outlined in its own 2004-2008 strategic plan. Specifically, I am referring to the following two goals:

"COMPETITION: Support the Nation's economy by ensuring that there is a comprehensive and sound competitive framework for communications services. Such a framework should foster innovation and offer consumers meaningful choice in services. Such a pro-competitive framework should be promoted domestically and overseas."

"MEDIA: Revise media regulations so that media ownership rules promote competition and diversity in a comprehensive, legally sustainable manner and facilitate the mandated migration to digital modes of delivery."

Every day, Americans are subjected to FEWER choices in media outlets, due to increasing ownership of media outlets by just a few large companies with clear political and ideological interests. These companies push a biased, right-wing agenda in their news reporting, to which Americans are forced to listen due to lack of choices.

For example, according to Businessweek, Rupert Murdoch's "satellites deliver TV programs in five continents, all but dominating Britain, Italy, and wide swaths of Asia and the Middle East. He publishes 175 newspapers, including the New York Post and The Times of London. In the U.S., he owns the Twentieth Century Fox Studio, Fox Network, and 35 TV stations that reach more than 40% of the country...His cable channels include fast-growing Fox News, and 19 regional sports channels. In all, as many as one in five American homes at any given time will be tuned into a show News Corp. either produced or delivered."

This is not a competitive market. This is not diversity, and it does not offer consumers meaningful choice. I strongly urge you to pass regulations immediately that roll back and further prevent the takeover of our national media by large companies with the goal of restoring true diversity in media choices. Please inform me of actions you take toward this goal.

-Dara Coan
Berkeley, CA

Stephanie Kost

From: Cathy Carlson [ccarlson@nwlinc.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 22, 2004 2:48 PM
To: KJMWEB
Subject: Challenge to the FCC to protect journalistic standards in thiscountry

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioner Kevin J. Martin:

After viewing Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism I came away with a deep concern that our democracy is in danger from the enormous control that one individual can and does have over the media in our country. How is it that one individual can own so many media outlets in our country?

I hope that all of the FCC Commissioners view this film and realize what is at stake and what the American people are losing by allowing this network to continue to portray their bias as fair and balanced reporting.

Sincerely,

Cathy Carlson
2221 109th Ave SE
Bellevue, WA 98004

Stephanie Kost

From: Catherine Burke [cburke@usc.edu]
Sent: Saturday, July 31, 2004 1:02 PM
To: Jonathan Adelstein; Kathleen Abernathy; KJMWEB; Michael Copps; Michael Powell
Subject: Network's Lack of Public Interest Broadcasting

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

I am sending copies of letters I wrote to the heads of the three major broadcast networks by mail to all of you. The airwaves belong to the public. Broadcasters have an obligation to the public they are failing to meet. Most recent example is their decision to run only three hours of the Democratic National Convention, even less than Al Jazeera.

Although it goes against the ideology of some members of the commission, a corporate oligopoly of our broadcast networks is unacceptable. Please start enforcing the laws regarding balance and public interest. I am sending an example of the letter I wrote to Jeffrey Immelt of GE, so you will actually receive my complaint. The same letter was sent to Sumner Redstone of Viacom/CBS and Bernard Gershon of ABC.

Thank you,
Catherine G. Burke
1516 S. Euclid Ave.
San Gabriel, CA 91776
626-573-0867

July 30, 2004

Mr. Jeffrey R. Immelt
President NBC Universal Television Group
General Electric Company
3135 Easton Turnpike
Fairfield, CT 06828-0001

Dear Mr. Immelt:

This letter is to tell you how disappointed I am in your network, NBC, for showing only three hours of the Democratic National Convention. You and the other two major broadcast networks have disgraced yourselves with your lack of coverage of an important public event. You have also demonstrated your indifference to the public interest. Many people do not have access to cable, so your truncated broadcast was all they could view. I don't expect you to be C-Span, but surely you could give three hours during prime time when in its place you ran junk.

All of the networks showed trivia rather than an important public event. I am copying this letter to the FCC and to the independent directors of GE. I believe your licenses to broadcast should be removed. Unbelievably, Al Jazeera had more coverage of the convention than you did. The airwaves are licensed to the networks to serve a public purpose, not just your own

profits. Either you must change or we in the public will demand that the networks become independent again rather than shills of corporate interests.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Catherine G. Burke

Cc: Independent Directors
Commissioners, FCC

RECEIVED
AUG 27 2004
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Stephanie Kost

From: Bill/Cynthia Tilden [bctilden@earthlink.net]
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2004 10:42 PM
To: Michael Powell
Subject: Request for the Public Good

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

I am writing to request that the public air waves be used primarily for the public good, unlike current usage. The licensees should be held accountable by the FCC to the needs of the public and our democracy.

First, if the public air waves were made available free of charge for the national elections as well as state and local elections, the damaging force of special interest campaign funding would be considerably reduced. The corporations making enormous profits with our airwaves can be regulated for the public good without being crippled.

Secondly, if news programs were developed that were not limited by the current for-profit, entertainment oriented approach, our democratic form of government would work better. So many news stories are not even aired while tabloid stories are repeated over and over because advertisers expect entertainment to draw a larger audience. The current public television and NPR options are limited in number and scope. Increased non-profit use of our airwaves would provide better national and international news coverage and serve a wider audience.

Cynthia Tilden
5499 Kales Ave.
Oakland CA 94618
510 428-0628
bctilden@earthlink.net

Stephanie Kost

RECEIVED

From: barrie mason [barriemason@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 05, 2004 9:09 PM
To: Michael Powell
Subject: regulations

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear FCC,

I am very concerned that media monopolies are controlling too much of the public discourse in this country. My local TV station is a Clear Channel owned station that carries very little local news. What we get is "lite" funny pieces or visits to local businesses. A week or two later these same businesses are advertising on this station, it looks like a deal where you get featured on the "news" if you agree to spend money on advertising. We have huge transportation issues, housing issues, farm labor issues, teen gang issues, and these don't get discussed unless there is violence involved.

I think that the public air waves should serve the public, not be a vehicle for corporations to manipulate spending habits. We are very badly informed by the corporate media. I support Mr. Copps' point of view and oppose Michael Powell's.

Sincerely,
Barrie Ann Mason

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Tired of spam? Yahoo! Mail has the best spam protection around
<http://mail.yahoo.com>

Stephanie Kost

RECEIVED

From: (Mrs) Meyer [millie@ulster.net]
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2004 9:12 PM
To: Commissioner Adelstein
Subject: FCC protect media independence

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioner:

One of the basic elements which help to keep the American media at least partially free and independent is the set of FCC regulations restricting consolidation and monopolies.

In the 2002 Biennial Review, the FCC appears to be planning to roll back many of these protective regulations: the Newspaper/Broadcast Cross-Ownership Rule, the National Broadcast Ownership Cap, the Local Radio Ownership Rule, the Duopoly Rule and the Dual Network Rule.

Relaxation or abandonment of the preceding rules will result in the purchase of local and independent newspapers and radio and television stations by large media giants. The cost to the American People and Democracy will be far too high if local news, reportorial freedom and access to a true variety of legitimate views are further compromised.

Commissioner, I urge you to make sure the FCC does not relax or drop these vital regulatory rules.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Mildred M. Meyer
119 East Road,
High Falls NY 12440-5016

Stephanie Kost

02-277

RECEIVED

From: Robb Lovell [robbl Lovell@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2004 7:21 PM
To: Michael Powell
Cc: Kathleen Abernathy; Michael Copps; KJMWEB; Jonathan Adelstein
Subject: Journalism...
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

I am concerned about the state of broadcast and cable television. Due to ownership of airwaves by fewer and fewer people and corporations no check or incentive exists to provide accurate information and news.

What is being done to remedy this situation?

Particularly, an example of this is the Fox News channel that claims "Fair and Balanced News". Yet Fox is not actually doing this.

Concerned Republican from Arizona

Robb Lovell

Stephanie Kost

RECEIVED

From: Cathy Carlson [ccarlson@nwlinc.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 22, 2004 3:40 PM
To: KAQuinn
Subject: Challenge to the FCC to protect journalistic standards in this country

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy:

After viewing Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism I came away with a deep concern that our democracy is in danger from the enormous control that one individual can and does have over the media in our country. How is it that one individual can own so many media outlets in our country?

I hope that all of the FCC Commissioners view this film and realize what is at stake and what the American people are losing by allowing this network to continue to portray their bias as fair and balanced reporting.

Sincerely,

Cathy Carlson
2221 109th Ave SE
Bellevue, WA 98004

Stephanie Kost

From: William P (Bill) Densmore [WPDensmore@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2004 9:12 PM
To: Commissioner Adelstein
Subject: FCC don't allow media monopolies

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioner:

One of the basic elements which help to keep the American media at least partially free and independent is the set of FCC regulations restricting consolidation and monopolies.

In the 2002 Biennial Review, the FCC appears to be planning to roll back many of these protective regulations: the Newspaper/Broadcast Cross-Ownership Rule, the National Broadcast Ownership Cap, the Local Radio Ownership Rule, the Duopoly Rule and the Dual Network Rule.

Relaxation or abandonment of the preceding rules will result in the purchase of local and independent newspapers and radio and television stations by large media giants. The cost to the American People and Democracy will be far too high if local news, reportorial freedom and access to a true variety of legitimate views are further compromised.

Commissioner, I urge you to make sure the FCC does not relax or drop these vital regulatory rules.

Sincerely,

William P. (Bill) Densmore
10 Algonquin Road
Worcester, MA 01609

Stephanie Kost

From: William P (Bill) Densmore [WPDensmore@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2004 9:11 PM
To: KJMWEB
Subject: FCC promote media decentralization

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioner Martin:

As the FCC considers new regulations regarding ownership of media in the United States, I urge you to make sure that you promote multiplicity of ownership, so that it is impossible for one or a few giant corporations to control the American media.

Commissioner Martin we are already at a crisis point in this regard. Five giants own 90% of the media, and this has resulted in biased reporting and poor news coverage. Independence of view and analysis has suffered.

The FCC must take steps to encourage independent reporting and analysis and freer access to government news sources. Don't allow the American media to become monotonous and biased!

Sincerely,

William P. (Bill) Densmore
10 Algonquin Road
Worcester, MA 01609

Stephanie Kost

RECEIVED

From: Virginia Boyle [gboyle02@msn.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2004 9:09 PM
To: Michael Powell
Subject: Don't allow monopoly of media channels

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioner Powell:

Numerous reports agree that the Federal Communications is planning to loosen longstanding rules governing control of the media that bring news and views to the American public. This will inevitably lead to monopoly, by a few large corporate giants, of TV stations, newspapers, and broadcast networks.

I urge you, Commissioner Powell, to halt immediately any implementation of these these FCC plans that threaten public access to diverse views and information.

Sincerely,

Virginia Boyle

Stephanie Kost

RECEIVED

From: Vicar Of Revelwood [vicar@revelwood.org]
Sent: Tuesday, August 10, 2004 12:48 AM
To: Michael Powell
Subject: Radio Ownership!

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Mr. Powell,
I oppose the Lifting of limits of radio ownership. We have enough
problems with loosing community based radio programing. The loss of
local voices and their points of view of the issues should not be up
for sale. their is too much concentration of media ownership already. William Mc Devitt

Stephanie Kost

From: treehugger@access-4-free.com
Sent: Sunday, August 22, 2004 3:53 PM
To: KAQuinn
Subject: Stop media consolidation

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioner,

I am deeply concerned about the power a handful of major media companies exert on what we hear, read and see. A democracy depends upon truthful holistic coverage of issues, correct information and items of community interest and interactivity. Right now I cannot get more than 5 minutes of local coverage, but have to webstream a station from San Francisco, which was bumped by the FCC for a station in Grass Valley, which only plays music, not to my taste. Please adopt new rules that cap ownership at 35% and prohibit cross-ownership of newspapers and broadcast stations.

Thank you,
Lanna Seuret
3633 Edison Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95821

Stephanie Kost

From: Taggart, Damian [DTaggart3@tvi.edu]
Sent: Monday, August 09, 2004 11:33 AM
To: Michael Powell; Kathleen Abernathy; Michael Copps; KJMWEB; Jonathan Adelstein; FOIA; Webmaster; Campaignlaw
Subject: Concern About FCC Reforms

Dear FCC workers,

I am dropping you a line to make you aware that I am deeply troubled by the increased deregulation of major corporate media outlets.

I have had serious concerns about current media reform beginning with the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and these are now deepened by the new FCC rules that allow one company to own a daily newspaper, as many as three television stations, and up to eight radio stations in a single market. These changes benefit large media corporations like Clear Channel and News Corporation, as well as Viacom, owner of CBS; General Electric, owner of NBC; and Disney, owner of ABC.

These benefits come at the expense of quality local and national news, necessary for a thriving democracy. Giant media corporations have vested interests and agendas which, when unregulated, do not serve the public good, but rather the profit margins of major media outlets and their advertisers.

Since 1995, corporate media giants and their affiliates have spent \$124 million on political contributions and lobbyists in Washington. Although I can't compete with this kind of influence economically, I would like to make you aware that there are millions of Americans who are outraged by the current trend of FCC deregulation that favors corporate profiteering over a healthy mental environment and informed citizenry.

I personally know more than fifty individuals in my community (Albuquerque, NM) who share this sentiment, and each of those people in turn knows others. We represent a significant portion of the American public. I urge you to listen to the American people. Rethink and overturn these FCC rules that do not serve the American people or our democracy.

Damian Taggart, 605 Ridgecrest SE

Albuquerque, NM 87108

Stephanie Kost

From: SIMS444SS@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, July 31, 2004 4:33 PM
To: KAQuinn
Subject: Broadcast Ownership

Dear Mr. Powell, Ms. Abernathy, Mr. Copps, Mr. Martin & Mr. Adelstein:

I urge you **NOT** to relax the broadcast ownership rules that protect American citizens from media monopolies.

These proposed changes would pave the way for giant media conglomerates to gain near-total control of radio and television news and information in communities across our nation. And many of the corporations that are now lobbying the FCC to relax these ownership rules already have a known track record of trying to keep opposing viewpoints off the air.

The American people deserve to hear more than one point of view on important issues. Therefore, for the sake of our republican form of government and our liberty, I urge you to continue the broadcast ownership protections that, for decades, have helped to ensure a healthy political debate in our country.

Sincerely,
Steve Sims
5313 Stewart Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23464-7829
Sims444SS@aol.com

Stephanie Kost

From: Shep Shepard [flyfisherga@alltel.net]
Sent: Thursday, August 05, 2004 4:29 PM
To: KJMWEB
Subject: media concentration

Please do not propose changes to Congress that would increase concentration in the Media.

In the long run Democracy cannot survive when a few can influence the information content seen and read by our people.

We need to DECREASE concentration NOT INCREASE concentration.

E. H. Shepard

Stephanie Kost

From: Russ at Bear Trax Enterprises [nbr660@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 09, 2004 2:49 PM
To: KAQuinn
Subject: I believe this is wrong to sat this on air

I am hoping that this letter makes it to the right people because how angry I am from watching the Top 20 Countdown this morning on Vh1 with Rachael Perry. Miss Perry and her ignorant mouth was introducing the top 10 of the Top 20 with Finger Eleven and spoke of how they had recieved an award at the Much Music Award Ceremony. She said not to worry that nobody lives there anyway.

#10 Finger Eleven (Canadian)

then after that it was

#9 Avril Lavigne (also Canadian)

oh yes and somewhere not far from the top ten was

Nickleback (yep Canadian)

This is not the first time that I have heard and payed to hear Miss Perry make snid remarks about Canada and her people. People pay a good dollar to watch VH1 on Satelite systems here in the US as well as Canada. Just inform this wanna be comedian that yes Canada is not overly populated. In fact the population of the whole country is the size of the state of New Jersey. As a Canadian resideing in the US I would like to say to Miss Perry, that I think your comments are insulting and are not an attractive representation of Vh1 or Americans as a whole. Unlike Miss Perry there is talent in Canada, and it reflects on the Top 20 countdown every week.

Thank you a proud Canadian,

Jackie Campbell
601 E Benton
Windsor MO
65360

Today with the U.S. & Canadian tensions, the comments this host used on several previously veiwed show, seem as if the station agrees with her. We as Americans & Canadians pay for entertainment, and not for our sprouses to be humiliated on t.v.. I am in the hopes you will deem it necessary to have a little chat with this station about the material they allow on the airwaves.

Russell K. Campbell
A proud AMERICAN

Do you Yahoo!?
[New and Improved Yahoo! Mail](#) - Send 10MB messages!

Stephanie Kost

From: Rose Griego-Metro Murals [reelyrosie@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, June 25, 2004 12:38 PM
To: Kathleen Abernathy; Michael Powell; KJMWEB; Michael Copps; Jonathan Adelstein
Subject: Dispatch From Portland, Oregon



Metro Murals FCC
Testimony-Jun...

Attached is testimonial from the Town Hall Meeting held in Portland, Oregon, June 24th, 2004 from public arts group, Metro Murals.

While we did take a moment to celebrate the court victory yesterday, there is still much to be said on the issue of media consolidation. Be assured that we here in Portland are closely watching the proceedings (despite the fact that not one major media outlet in Portland reported on yesterdays meeting or the court ruling) and will be a strident voice and see that it is forwarded to the American public.

Thank you,

Rose Griego
Chairperson
METRO MURALS
(503) 516-6173

"I am for an art that is political-eretical-mystical, that does something other than sit on its ass in a museum" Claes Oldenburg

Stephanie Kost

From: Robert E. Wilkinson [robtw@sprynet.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 10, 2004 8:48 AM
To: Michael Powell
Subject: Stop the Corporate Monopoly of the Nations Media Now!!!!

Dear Comissioner,

I am writing to demand that the FCC take immediate action to break up the domination and concentration of the public media by corporate conglomerates the likes of Rupert Murdoch and Clear Channel. As an American citizen I am simply apalled at the FCC's turning a blind eye to the abuses and propagandizing programming of the Fox News Network. It tells its viewers that it is "Fair and Balanced" when nothing could be further from the truth.

Watch the recent video called "Outfoxed" and do your jobs.

With best regards,

RE Wilkinson

Stephanie Kost

From: Robb Lovell [robbl Lovell@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2004 7:21 PM
To: Michael Powell
Cc: Kathleen Abernathy; Michael Copps; KJMWEB; Jonathan Adelstein
Subject: Journalism...

I am concerned about the state of broadcast and cable television. Due to ownership of airwaves by fewer and fewer people and corporations no check or incentive exists to provide accurate information and news.

What is being done to remedy this situation?

Particularly, an example of this is the Fox News channel that claims "Fair and Balanced News". Yet Fox is not actually doing this.

Concerned Republican from Arizona

Robb Lovell

Stephanie Kost

From: Rob5711@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, August 19, 2004 8:26 AM
To: Michael Powell
Subject: I oppose any further consolidation of the TV and radio media

Mr. Powell,

I saw hearings and discussion with Mr. Copps and agree with him that any further consolidation of the TV and radio media is against the interests of the American people who own the airwaves. Already, the largest companies own most of the cable networks and use them to show reruns of their regular network shows and to promote their regular network shows as does NBC with its ownership of several cable networks. NBC eliminated the news with Brian Williams on cable and replaced it with another empty talk show. This is not in the interest of the American people to be well informed. From watching C-Span and from my reading, I know that journalist jobs have been eliminated left and right in newspapers and network and cable news and investigative journalism is a thing of the past on TV. That is why people are flocking to theatres to see Fahrenheit 9-11 and other independent documentaries because the news media has forsaken their responsibilities. If anything, the big media companies should be required to divest themselves of radio stations and cable channels to independent owners including women, minorities and to include other segments of our society who are not considered the the right audience for advertisers like the poor and elderly. More hearings on media consolidation should be held at as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Carl Kakasuleff
Indianapolis

Stephanie Kost

From: Randy . Minton [rminton@swainsborotech.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, July 06, 2004 11:49 AM
To: Michael Powell
Subject: What is it that you folks actually do?

You allow the so-called news media to editorialize ad infinitum, never allowing a balanced presentation, and you allow it simply because they do not come on and say, "This is an editorial comment". While I firmly believe in freedom of speech, you should be looking at substance over form where the news is concerned. Americans should have the right to expect that the news media report the "news" accurately, and you should have mechanisms in place where stations are required to have ombudsmen to make sure that happens. Additionally, you should be issuing truth in labeling reports on the all "news" channels. If one has a station and all it does is promote a particular political agenda and particular candidates, should they not have to give equal time? If one has such a channel and does 98% positive stories on one candidate and 98% negative stories on another, are they not editorializing? At the very minimum, metrics should be developed and statistics kept as to the number of articles in favor of particular candidates and their issues— not just by a privately funded group – but by YOU, and these statistics should be prominently shown on your web site. If you have no such statistics now, how do you know whether stations are even in violation?

One cannot yell, "Fire!" in a crowded theatre because the lives doing so endangers exceeds the right to do so. You regularly allow news stations to indiscriminately yell the equivalent, and beam it out internationally, endangering the lives of our soldiers and our citizens. While these stations are entitled to their opinions and may freely express them, opinion should be noted as such. I also would like to see a prominently displayed format for citizens to use when they believe commercially licensed stations are in violation of the public trust, and statistics to be published showing the number of complaints, by station.

Outgoing mail is certified Virus Free.
Checked by AVG anti-virus system (<http://www.grisoft.com>).
Version: 6.0.708 / Virus Database: 464 - Release Date: 6/18/2004

Stephanie Kost

From: Matthew Freeman [Matthew.Freeman@gettyimages.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 04, 2004 11:22 AM
To: Michael Powell
Cc: Kathleen Abernathy; Michael Copps; KJMWEB; Jonathan Adelstein
Subject: Fines for Obscenity

Chairperson Powell and other Commission Members:

As a private citizen, I have become concerned with increasingly tough regulations on certain kinds of obscenity on television and radio; as restrictions are eased on media ownership and misleading journalism. These may not strike you as connected issues, but their juxtaposition poses an important question to me: what sort of speech is damaging and needs to be regulated?

The small number of organizations that own and make directives to thousands of media outlets is alarming. You'll find very few people outside of Washington, DC that don't feel that way. What strikes me as more alarming is the lack of regulation that the major news media can receive. Fox News, the pervading culprit, does direct damage to the credibility of news organizations and undermines the democratic process. Fox allows, for profit and partisanship, its pundits to make broad untrue statements without presenting credible sources; to present guests with a narrow political perspective on their popular cable network; and even presents its reporters with directives about what sort of opinion should be presented throughout the day. This is a public feed of a certain point of view (i.e. propoganda), unsupported by much fact, presented as journalism. If Fox would present themselves as a political organization, it would be understood and harmless. But it presents itself as objective, even more objective than more reputable news sources.

My question then is: how is this unregulated? Why are no fines imposed for making slanderous political statements without sources? What penalty can Fox News, or any news organization, receive for not providing equal time, for presenting themselves as objective and presenting op-ed commentary in that context, for simply shifting the journalism away from facts and into the realm of punditry and wrangling? In a society that has the health of its democratic process at heart, this should be regulated.

This does damage to our democracy. This is not hyperbole: a vast majority of Americans receive their news from television and it is absolutely and completely necessary for there to be efforts made to keep journalism honest for the American public. Democracy and voting are influenced by information and the form that information takes. If the public is uneducated or swayed by propoganda from what is a covert messenger, our system is denied the informed voters that make the best possible decisions for their country. It is their right to that information; without it, they are at the mercy of the few.

When heavy fines can be levied at musicians that say "fuck" on television (a word most 5th graders know and use), it seems like a lack of perspective as to what is important to regulate. If an anchor on a news organization claims to have "heard people say" something about a political candidate without a direct source, for example, why isn't that anchor fined or asked to provide a retraction if the statement can't be proven?

If the defense of allowing journalism to continue to erode is "freedom of the press" and "freedom of speech," then why are certain words regulated at all? If the media is to be allowed to speak mostly with opinion, and to lower the public discourse, rules should be enforced to separate sourced, objective journalism from biased reporting and fluff. The news cannot be replaced by opinion; opinion can be argued but never proven false. Facts, on the other hand, give us a handle on the true and the false. What actually happened, who said it, at what time, what their words were, how many died, what is in a piece of legislation: these are facts. Let journalists uncover and report on facts; let stand up comics editorialize.

If the FCC is an organization that serves the public, and is a regulatory body that has a relevant purpose in 2004, it must not only regulate puritanically, it must enforce guidelines about the QUALITY of the information that the public receives. It is only with quality information and regulation that we can ensure journalism doesn't become a parody