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MCA 311

Issue Reaction Paper #6

Issue: Obscenity and indecency

Case: Fox vs. FCC

The FCC put their foot down on a FOX show called “Married by America” which showed raunchy bachelor and bachelorette parties in Las Vegas hotels. In the 2003 episode, the FCC thought showing party goers licking whipped cream off stripper’s bodies was “sexually suggestive” and proposed a 1.2 million dollar fine.

The FCC regulates when shows with high sexual content may be aired to the public, in order to keep children from stumbling upon these certain shows. Between the hours of 6am through 10pm shows, which are inappropriate to children, are not to be aired. The FOX show aired at 8pm or 9pm depending on the city (cbsnews.com, 2009) so it was pushing the time frame in which it should have been aired to avoid complains to the FCC.

During the show body parts such as bare breasts and buttocks where pixilated, but the FCC is arguing, “isolated body parts that were pixilated did not obscure the overall graphic character of the depiction” (zap2it.com, 2008). FOX did its job by pixilating exposed body parts and they argued, “that the FCC’s indecency enforcement authority is confined by law to words, not images” (Eggerton, 2008). The argument FOX used to validate they were not violating any laws in true, validate they were not violating any laws is true; the FCC does not prohibit broadcasters from transmitting pixilated indecent pictures.

It is clear FOX does not agree with the FCC but the FCC still thought the content of the show was indecent. I would have to agree with FOX because the broadcast company did pixilate what they thought was indecent. The show was played later in the night, and FCC regulations limited to indecent words not images. Yet, “the FCC ruled that FOX stations and affiliates to pay seven thousand dollars a piece in fines stemming from complaints about the notorious April 7, 2003 episode” (zap2it.com , 2008).

References

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