

I must admit, though, aside from adult movies, the worst television violence is in sports. I do sometimes see little kids, like six and seven-year-olds, copy things they see in wrestling and hockey.³⁶

C. COMPLAINTS ABOUT TELEVISION VIOLENCE

If we postulate that the television programs watched by the majority of Canadians are nearly as violent as those watched by Americans, it is perplexing to find that Canadians seem to have little awareness and make little use of the national public bodies set up by Parliament and by private broadcasters to receive their complaints on broadcasting matters.

The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC) is a self-regulatory council established by the private broadcasting industry to handle viewer and listener complaints about private sector radio and television programming. In its Annual Report for 1991-1992, the CBSC refers to the few complaints it received about television violence:

While we know from general letters from interest groups of the continuing public concern about television violence, we were surprised to receive so few specific complaints regarding violence (10 out of 101 code-relevant complaints).³⁷

The other national public institution which is mandated to handle complaints about television violence is the CRTC. In its capacity as federal regulator for the broadcasting industry, the CRTC only received 40 complaints about television violence in 1991-1992.

The small number of complaints filed with these two institutions compared with over 1.3 million people who signed Virginie Larivière's petition is perplexing. On the positive side, it could be argued that Canadians have not become desensitized to violence, as evidenced by the large number of people who signed the petition. On the negative side, it is difficult to understand why so few Canadians complain to the appropriate bodies. We will have more to say on this subject later.

D. VIOLENCE IN VIDEOS

Committee members were told that film producers, partly in an attempt to remain competitive with television, are making more and more violent movies. Sandra Macdonald, President of the Canadian Film and Television Production Association, agreed that movies are getting more violent:

Now, I would say that it is certainly the case that movies have gotten more violent. . . in a way the more alarming thing is the stuff that is really very popular and aimed at a very large audience, and not the disgusting but narrowly targeted stuff. . . quite a range have been sort of running forward, from "Rambo" and "Texas Chainsaw Massacres" over the last decade and the body count has been getting higher year by year. That is certainly the case.³⁸

It is true that films are rated by provincial film review boards, that cinemas advertise this film rating, and that cinemas are required to forbid entry to persons under the age limit allowed by the film rating. However, most films made for release in cinemas eventually find their way into the video