

CBC: Crappy Broadcasting Corporation?

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Contributor

Before I commence my latest assault on pop culture, allow me to preface this with one fact: I am a huge fan of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The CBC has, time and again, proven to have an excellent balance of fun, informational and—yuck—sports. I have grown up with the CBC and watched it flourish like a beautiful flower. Like a flower, however, it must also wilt, die, and eventually become worm food. At present I feel it has fallen into the latter category.

Take for instance its latest production titled simply *The Tournament*. The show is supposed to



elucidate the obvious stupidity of parents involved in child hockey; instead it merely reflects a distinct lack of creativity. The logo is a distinct rip-off from HBO's award-winning series *The Sopranos*, and yet there is no similarity between the two. Secondly the acting in the show is distinctly similar to a cardboard pizza box; the coach waffles between being perceived as a ladies man, to being gay. The storyline, while continuous throughout the show, is disjointed and feels like it has been slapped together over a weekend of binging pizza and beer.

The next show to come under the microscope is Mary Walsh's *Hatching, Matching and Dispatching*. The plotline for this show is bizarre. The Fureys are a Newfoundland family who run the local ambulance service, the

funeral parlor, and wedding chapel, but holds some promise to be able to show true-to-life representations of Newfoundlanders in small out port towns. Instead, however, the audience is treated to 30 minutes of crass, lowbrow humour that borders on the obscene. Now, I have known several Newfies and don't remember any one of them having their water break during their wedding, crying their heart out, all with their dead father presiding over the whole affair. This isn't CBC's only foray into removing stereotypes from Canadian society.

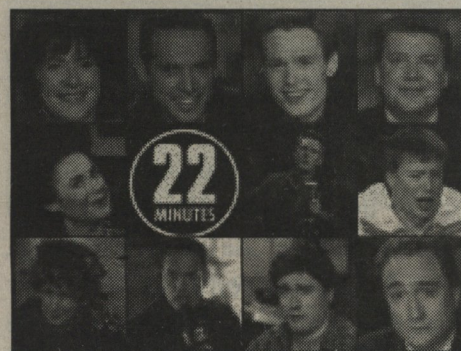
One of the more established of CBC's new shows is *Ciao Bella*. The story involves a young, unmarried, Italian woman named Elena who lives with her (extremely) Italian family in Montreal and tries to reconcile her culture with her personal life. The premise is exceptionally well thought out for a CBC production this season—heck, I'd say this show has the basis for a movie! Oh, wait, that's right it was



a movie. My *Big Fat Greek Wedding* is a movie about a young, unmarried, Grecian woman named Tula who lives with her (extremely) Greek family in Boston (actually Toronto) and tries to reconcile her culture with her personal life. Coincidence? I think not.

And the perpetuating of stereotypical views hasn't finished. Two

of the CBC's flagship comedies: *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, and *Royal Canadian Air Farce* both have engaged in mocking different cultures. Nothing that would border on racist, but it certainly shows that the writers cannot come up with effectual comedy without resorting to Raj Binder or *INN: The Iraqi News Network* and their mad camel. Sure, the segment of *Air Farce*




with the guy saying "No Visa, or I kill you!" or Raj Binder sneaking into the *Greats Hockey Picture* was cute the first time, but need we drag it out with little

to no new and fresh material?

The worst of these shows though, would have to be *Making The Cut*. With Canadians so entirely depressed about the lack of hockey in the country, CBC debased itself to creating a reality television series all about a group of individuals looking to *Make The Cut*, presumably to play in one of our hockey franchises. Well, looks like that honour will have to be put on hold.

It would seem, at least at present, that the CBC is trying to do what many stations did long ago: become nothing more than a copycat franchise, pumping out cookie-cutter show after cookie-cutter show. When this occurs, not only do quality and originality go flying out the window, but also culture stagnates. We no longer make advances, because we are stuck in a perpetual loop of reality television, cultural stereotypes, and stories that seem package wrapped.



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