

GENCENSORED

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

N C R O P A

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

NO/DAW/DP

7th April 1987.

Mrs. Joanna Bogle,
National Viewers' & Listeners' Association,
Ardleigh,
Colchester,
Essex, CO7 7RH.

Dear Mrs. Bogle,

As Mary Whitehouse's gullible and misguided protégée, and someone who claims to have "learnt a lot from her", may I endeavour to put you right on a number of points raised in Duncan Campbell's article "Into the Fray" ('London Daily News' April 3rd) ?

(1) Gerald Howarth's/The Government's/Mary Whitehouse's 'private member's Bill' does not provide an alternative test of obscenity. It provides an additional test.

(2) His outrageously draconian Bill will not make any difference to any-
one's attitude other than to further incense the majority of the people of the U.K. who are opposed to censorship and especially this kind of 'catch-all' legislation.

(3) Every teenager in the sixties did not think Mrs. Whitehouse was "a silly old thing". Many thought she was a very clever, but dangerous and, at times, even evil old thing. I shared those views.

(4) The 'Cambridge Rapist' was a mentally ill man who had previously been a patient at the Maudsley Psychiatric Hospital and Broadmoor Hospital for the criminally insane. The Yorkshire Ripper was similarly mentally deranged and a socially and sexually inadequate religious maniac.

(5) Homosexuals are just as entitled to have their bars as heterosexuals - or even the sexless.

(6) Homosexual activity is not gravely sinful - it is not even sinful. I would suggest that one lesson it is essential for you to learn before you go any further, is that your own personal beliefs are not absolute truth and it is a supreme arrogance on your part to think that they are.

(7) As a professional actor who has worked for BBC Television on hundreds of occasions over the past thirty years, I know from first hand experience, that there is nothing "smug" about the BBC's attitude to sex and/or violence.

(8) The copy-cat, imitative effect on people from watching television programmes is grossly over-stated and, even if it weren't, is not in itself res-

possible for anti-social, criminal or aberrant behaviour and there is, nor has there ever been, no real evidence whatsoever to support such a theory.

(9) Most of the vomit-making rubbish that spews forth from Mrs. Whitehouse's lips is not merely as dumb as it sounds. It is even dumber.

(10) Having worked for three such appalling M.P.s as Patrick Jenkin, Patrick Wall and Sir Gerard Vaughan, I am not at all surprised that your values have become so distorted and that you have defected to the grotesque Whitehouse camp.

(11) People today are no more beginning to realise that something that looked new and exciting and 'fab' ... is now "somehow mucky and sleazy", than they did 25 years ago. Those ^{that} find sex and sexuality "mucky and sleazy" often have "mucky and sleazy" minds themselves. That is certainly my own experience.

(12) Mrs. Whitehouse's showing of edited extracts from television programmes in the House of Commons on February 16th was not "packed". Only about thirty MPs (out of a total of 650) turned up. The rest of the audience was made up of journalists (and of course, Judge Alan King Hamilton, who ought to have known better than to aid and abet the illegal copying of TV programmes).

(13) No scenes of "explicit sex" have ever been shown on British television, so MPs could certainly not be said to be keeping themselves "informed on explicit sex", as Mr. Campbell suggests.

(14) You may like Mrs. Whitehouse, but neither I, nor millions of other citizens of this depressingly repressed, censor-saturated country, can possibly have one iota of respect for so arrogant, intolerant, bigoted and un-compassionate a woman, who seeks to impose her standards on everyone else by the force of law.

(15) I do not consider that, for example, prosecuting Michael Bogdanov for directing a play at the National Theatre, or Denis Lemon for publishing a homosexual poem in "Gay News", are the acts of "a very kindly woman who likes to be good to people". If you believe such acts show a "fundamental decency about her", your own powers of rational character assessment must surely be in question.

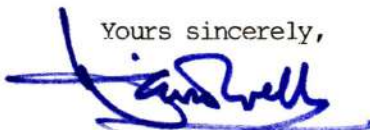
(16) Not all feminists are anti-pornography. Indeed, we have many who are members of the National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts. Even an organisation like "Women Against Rape" is not against it.

(17) This country has never been so-called "permissive". That is one of the greatest misnomers ever and it is therefore nonsensical to claim that people now realise they were too much so.

(18) I would challenge the figure of 30,000 as the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association's membership, but in any case, this is hardly representative of the country at large with a population of some 56,000,000.

(19) Richard Patterson of the British Film Institute has obviously not heard of the N.C.R.O.P.A. if he plans to form a new anti-censorship organisation. There is no need since we have been in business for eleven years in spite of Mary Whitehouse's early dismissal of us. I shall be writing to Mr. Patterson forthwith.

Yours sincerely,



David Webb

Honorary Director,

National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts