

To: CRTC
Attn: Secretary General
cc.: John Levy
Date: July 4, 2000
RE: 2000-07147 PrideVision and Rainbow Radio

To the CRTC Secretary General,

I believe the PrideVision initiative being put forth by John Levy is an excellent idea. Having a television channel that specifically speaks to and represents the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered community is exactly the type of multifaceted, creative approach needed to help bridge social gaps in our society. I believe PrideVision would contribute a great deal towards creating a more healthy, inclusive, and self-empowered society.

I personally have many wonderful friends and dear relatives who are of alternative orientations. They are good people who wish well for, and do well by, society. Yet, I also recognize that their lives growing up were deeply affected by society's negative perceptions of, and responses to, their orientation. In fact, it seems every person of alternative orientation whom I have ever known has experienced serious confusion, depression, and a sense of self-hatred at some point in their lives, simply for being who they are—simply for loving whomever they choose to love. Some people I know live in the “margins” for a number of reasons. For them, “abnormal” sexual orientation or gender identity is just one problem among many to contend with. Such people often experience suicidal moments, and some actually kill themselves because of the still strong perception of homosexuality as being a social abnormality.

Canada needs to find ways to create affirming social environments, in order to foster a strong and healthy sense of identity as a nation. In other words, we need to create a place where we may continue to be proud to live, and where people learn to use their knowledge constructively—not in hate or intolerance, with countless people suffering silently in shame, rejected and abused. Surely, we do not want a country where our youth are increasingly disenfranchised and violent, where poverty and homelessness grows by leaps and bounds, and where economic disparity leads to an increasingly antagonistic society?

Being queer is an issue that cuts across all segments of society. Many queer Canadians have contributed significantly to this country's development, and continue to do so. Isn't it time we started acknowledging that these people *do* exist, and not force them to hide their sexuality in total shame? By fostering a greater level of mutual acceptance, it is possible that more cohesiveness and increased well-being may be the result for our society as a whole.

To the CRTC, I say BRAVO for taking on this exciting and empowering new project! Canada can no longer afford to be a place of so-called mutual tolerance and diversity in mere name and policy—we must “walk the talk” in order to maintain our strength and independence as a nation. I and my entire family and our many friends would be extremely proud and gratified to see this wonderful proposal become a reality.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely yours,

"The moment we break faith with one another,
the sea engulfs us and the light goes out."
- James Baldwin