

THE PARENTS TELEVISION COUNCIL

Since 1995, the socially conservative Parents Television Council has been pushing for government censorship of television in order to “protect children” from what they perceive as “offensive material” in the entertainment industry. While many of their attempts to petition the FCC into fining television networks have failed, they continue nonetheless on their path to, ultimately, the destruction of freedom of expression. This ridiculous organization must be brought down – if parents view something as “offensive” on television, they should just turn it off, not spam the government into doing it for them.

It is true that the entertainment industry – comprising mainly of television, film and the Internet – can be, at times, an offensive and adult-oriented world. Many currently broadcasting television shows and entire networks at times violate the “morals” of many people. They illustrate “disgusting” situations and use “terrible” language. Many socially conservative people would say that this kind of content on TV, something watched by millions of people daily, would reach the fresh and untaught minds of our children who have yet to discover this adult world of knowledge. That is why they want it censored, cut out or moved to late at night. *“Think of the children!”*

The Parents Television Council, or PTC, was founded in 1995 by conservative activist L. Brent Bozell III with the goal of “bringing back responsibility and family values to the entertainment industry”. They attempt to do this by essentially spamming the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) with complaints until their target is fined for their alleged “indecentcy”. Over the years, their victims have included most of the animated adult shows, especially *Family Guy*, morning shows such as *The Today Show* and the *Morning Show* for accidentally airing “vulgar language”, *American Idol* for the same reason, and an ABC show called *Dirty Sexy Money* (which would obviously be offensive and was aired past the 10:00 deadline). Detailed critiques of dozens of shows are available at their surprisingly well-constructed website parentstv.org.

What I and many others don’t understand about the PTC is that when they see something “offensive” on television, they don’t turn it off; they ask the government to do it for them and millions of other viewers who may actually *want* to watch the show. It is not the job of the FCC to go around serving a group of endlessly annoying parents who believe their moral standards are or should be everyone’s. The people in this group should stand up and turn of their *own* televisions for a change. If they can’t accept a relatively small amount of offensive material on TV, most of which children will never run across, they should simply throw their televisions away.

In addition to stalking television, the PTC also goes out of its way to criticize websites for vulgarity, namely video sharing site YouTube, and if there’s one thing that’s virtually impossible and unnecessary, it would be censoring the Internet. If the PTC has this position about TV and the World Wide Web, why don’t they burn “immoral” books as well?

When it comes to protecting young children from offensive material, we should take the position of Television Watch (televisionwatch.org), an organization endorsed by the entertainment industry that encourages parents to turn off their own televisions or send children away when something inappropriate comes on, not petition the government to fine to death a valuable and captivating section of the entertainment industry. In social issues, smaller government is better government, and the PTC’s goal is to give the FCC more and more control over what we can and can’t watch on television and the Internet. The PTC is making government too large for the United States of America.

In closing, not all parents share the same moral values as the 1 million people that make up the PTC do. There are many parents who have no problem with letting their kids watch *American Idol* or *Family Guy*, because they know how mature their children are. It is extremely doubtful that most American parents are as conservative with their children as the members of the PTC. This right-winged “family values” organization is trying to push their ethics down our throats, and it is unacceptable. If they hate television so much, they shouldn’t watch it. If they’re so disgusted at all the sex and violence airing today, they should turn it off for themselves. But *not for us*.