



"Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting"

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December 1, 2005

Pat Mitchell  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Public Broadcasting Service  
1320 Braddock Place  
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Complaint about *Breaking the Silence: Children's Stories*

Dear Ms. Mitchell,

I am writing on behalf of RADAR (Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting) in regard to the PBS program *Breaking the Silence: Children's Stories*.

As you undoubtedly know, Dr. Ken Bode, longtime newsman as well as Professor of Journalism, is also ombudsman for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. He has now reviewed the program. In his report (at <http://www.cpb.org/ombudsmen/051129bode.html>), he writes:

- "there is no hint of balance in *Breaking the Silence*"
- "The producers apparently do not subscribe to the idea that an argument can be made more convincing by giving the other side a fair presentation"
- "this broadcast is so slanted as to raise suspicions that either the family courts of America have gone crazy or there must be another side to the story"
- "Along with the motives of its sponsor (The Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation), *Breaking the Silence* needs to be reviewed for accuracy, fairness and balance."

Enclosed with this letter please find copies of:

1. November 14th letter from RADAR to U.S. Representative Fred Upton, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet, cosigned by 20 organizations from across the U.S.
2. November 2nd letter to you from ACFC, co-signed by RADAR, and cc'd to the Chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and to U.S. Representative Fred Upton, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet

 **RADAR** is a network of concerned men and women working to assure that the problem of domestic violence is treated in a balanced and effective manner. For more information, visit [www.mediadar.org](http://www.mediadar.org).

In light of the overwhelming evidence of bias, we are asking that PBS:

1. Retract *Breaking the Silence*.
2. Produce a documentary focusing on the plight of children abused by their mothers, and the anguish of fathers who are prevented by the courts from protecting their children.

We look forward to the completion of your 30 day review and your report by December 8<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,

Mark B. Rosenthal  
Media Representative

Enclosures:

11/14/2005 letter from RADAR to U.S. Representative Fred Upton (also available at [http://www.mediadar.org/docs/RADAR\\_letter\\_to\\_Upton.pdf](http://www.mediadar.org/docs/RADAR_letter_to_Upton.pdf))

11/2/2005 letter to you from ACFC (also available at [http://www.mediadar.org/docs/ACFC\\_to\\_PBS-2005-11-02a-100.pdf](http://www.mediadar.org/docs/ACFC_to_PBS-2005-11-02a-100.pdf))

cc:

Jan McNamara, Director of Corporate Communication  
Public Broadcasting Service

Jacoba Atlas, Co-Chief Program Executive  
Public Broadcasting Service

John Wilson, Senior Vice President & Co-Chief Program Executive  
Public Broadcasting Service

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Cindy Johanson, Senior Vice President, PBS Interactive and Education  
Public Broadcasting Service

Gustavo Sagastume, Vice President, Programming  
Public Broadcasting Service

Steven Gray, Vice President, Program Scheduling & Editorial Management  
Public Broadcasting Service

Linda Simensky  
Senior Director, PBS KIDS

Sandy Heberer, Senior Director, Primetime Programming  
Public Broadcasting Service

Allison Winshel, Senior Director, Primetime Programming  
Public Broadcasting Service