

**Subject: RE: Paintings**

**Date:** Fri, 25 Mar 2005 12:01:28 -0800

**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>

**To:** "Elizabeth James" <cagebc@yahoo.com>, "Pat Heal" <pheal@nvsd44.bc.ca>, <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <jmaloney@northshoreoutlook.com>

**CC:** "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>, "James Ridge" <James\_Ridge@dnv.org>, <poetic\_licence@hotmail.com>, "Alicia Lau" <laua@dnv.org>

Dear Ms James:

If this is so then why, when I submitted motions that we go on record and condemn corporate sponsored gratuitous violence on TV, as is the case in Britain and other European countries for example was there not a single person to speak in support of such a motion ever. Why, after it was established that corporate sponsored violence on TV is the main culprit in the poisoning of the minds of our youth and the brutalization of our society, was there not a single person to say boo. Why, if this is so, was there not a single organisation, including churches in this place of many churches, speaking in support of this going forward to the UBCM or the FCM. Why did not a single person not even from the "Together Against Violence", which received \$10,000 a year from the District, speak on this issue so that it could at least have been debated. Why, when I suggested that we urge that there be a community forum on this crucial issue, was there not a single person out of the 90,000 speaking in support this idea with the result that there was not even a seconder to this motion so it could at least be debated.

Allow me to tell you why. It is because the people who now have hernias about being reminded that there is violence against women and sexual exploitation of woman, are blind. No, that is not the reason, it is because they want to remain blind. It is because they can't stand the truth much less do something about this plight. It is because they are middle class coffee house complainers deploring violence but unwilling to do something about it. See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil. This is the real reason, the same reason why they were silent when their Heritage Fund was mismanaged. It is also the real reason why they demanded that these paintings be removed and why they were deemed unsuitable. The reason they gave for demanding their removal was that the paintings themselves were the culprits and in violation of the sex free workplace not what the painting was trying to say. This is like accusing a court of law as being a place of violence because during the exhibits they displayed the guns with which the crimes were committed. That should tell you something about the mentality of the Judge on this issue. Of course the paintings are deemed unsuitable. Who in his right mind in this smug and self satisfied and clueless community would want to be reminded that there is a problem?

However, maybe Mrs Adams, instead of getting all upset that her children might see such unpleasant and unsuitable paintings in the Municipal Hall, should have explained to her children that the artist was trying to point to the bad things that are going on in this society and this was his way of bringing it to our attention. But no, don't do that, shoot the messenger instead. It is much easier and much more conducive to keeping the eyes closed and not disturb the status quo or the cobwebs which are engulfing us. The evidence of this is that when a motion was made that the issue be debated via a temporary committee to determine what is and what is not suitable, the idea was condemned. That is when the cat was out of the bag. I am not stupid.

The bottom line, Mrs James, is that the people who have condemned the idea of providing guidelines are either totally unaware of what this whole issue is all about or, what is more serious, they want to remain unaware.

Yours truly

Ernie Crist

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From: Elizabeth James [<mailto:cagebc@yahoo.com>]  
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2005 8:13 AM  
To: Ernie Crist; Pat Heal  
Cc: Mayor and Council - DNV; Senior Management Committee  
Subject: RE: Paintings

Dear Clr. Crist:

Anyone with any awareness at all knows we live in a violent society. We do not need any "messages" about it, additional to those we see in our daily newscasts.

It is regrettable that, where some people work quietly and by example to turn the other face of society against the violence, others seem to get a perverse pleasure from viewing and inciting it.

Psychologists will tell anyone who cares to listen - and they do - that constant exposure to depictions and realities of violence, inures the viewer to its existence.

Once again, if the artist wishes to display the material, try an art gallery; in front of a captive audience at District Hall is not the place to promote it.

Ernie Crist <[ernie\\_crist@dnv.org](mailto:ernie_crist@dnv.org)> wrote:

Dear Ms Heal:

The artist did not commit any violence nor did he glorify it in his canvas. He showed that this IS a violent society. He showed that women are the primary victims not only of violence but also of sexual exploitation. It is the height of hypocrisy to punish the artist as being the culprit for exposing it in his canvas. I find it interesting that when I asked to support those concerned about corporate sponsored gratuitous violence on TV which is poisoning our Youth they did not even support this effort to the extent that it could be debated.

The real issue however is that there are no guidelines for artists nor for the Arts Council nor for the public to go by. The only measure we have is the opinion of persons many of whom who do not accept art as an instrument of social critique and are unwilling to establish any measure as to what is acceptable to be displayed in the Municipal Hall and what is not.

This is why I made a motion to that effect. THE Councillor clearly does not understand that, neither would he, in my opinion have the fortitude to stand up for it.

Yours truly,

Ernie Crist

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From: Pat Heal [<mailto:pheal@nvsd44.bc.ca>]  
Sent: Thursday, March 24, 2005 3:43 PM  
To: Mayor Harris; Jim Cuthbert; Richard Walton; Maureen McKeon

Holmes; Alan Nixon; Lisa Muri; Ernie Crist  
Cc: John McPherson; Dennis Back; James Ridge;  
cathyadams@canada.com  
Subject: Paintings

Mayor and Council,

At the request of Councillor Cuthbert, I got in touch with Cathy Adams about her concerns about the artwork in the foyer at District Hall. Jim the had contacted me in my previous role as the Chair of Together Against Violence Network. Today, Thursday March 24th, I went up to the hall to see for myself. I must say that I am not in favour of these violent paintings being displayed in our District Hall. It would be different if they were disployed in a gallery where people would make a choice to view such violent work. In a space open to the general public, the subjects seem pretty extreme to be forced to view. It is in such contrast the the display inside the front door of tolerance and a violence free society.


I hope that council will reconsider the showing of this art work in such a public place.

Pat Heal  
School Board Trustee  
North Vancouver District 44  
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