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Honorable Cambridge City Council
795 Mass Avenue
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March 13, 2003

Abuses at CCTV

I urge the Cambridge City Council to address continuing abuses at Cambridge Community Television. The accomplishments of women throughout history cannot be ignored. The fact that many otherwise vulnerable women have been able to attain great achievements through affirmative action campaigns over the past 45 years is a testament to the effectiveness of mutual aid and assistance by other citizens.

Today women are in high positions of the political world, the academic world, the business world, the Cambridge City government and local non profit agencies. They continue to act as if they are denied access to any or all places which were historically denied to them.

In Cambridge there is a Women's Commission, but no Men's Commission. This is not meant to shock the Council but there are vulnerable men in Cambridge, who are abused by public and private persons with no means of redress. There are political issues, groups and individuals who do not have such extensive access to the CCTV facilities.

On Saturday March 8, 2003 the Associated Press reported that a "women's group is seeking permission to stage a protest during the Masters Golf tournament in Georgia next month." Having achieved major employment goals, the ability to work and to live having real or imagined offenses addressed by the police, the courts and the politicians is noteworthy.

Yet, if as they claim, women are human, they have the same frailties as men. Some women are criminals. Some are liars and some are power abusers. Some are all three.

The Executive Director of CCTV, repeatedly abused her power for more than 10 years. During this period she was able to scare away anyone who recognized her abuses. Using her unquestioned authority, she fired and harassed anyone who questioned her misappropriations. This continues today.

The Executive Director refuses to address attacks on disabled persons, and personally attacked one disabled member. This remains an ongoing problem which the City Council refuses to address; showing they share that unlawful bias. One CCTV intern acted rudely, abusively and disrespectful toward the same disabled

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volunteer, repeatedly over six months. She was intentionally negligent in her duties for more than six months. The Executive Director of CCTV, refused to address these abuses and lets the intern continue in her position continuing to abuse that volunteer member-producer. Repeated complaints have been and continue to be ignored.

The Executive Director, the City Council, and the Board of Directors refuse to stop this abuse. It was ignored by the Chair of the City Council's Cable TV committee, another woman of accomplishment, who acted just as rudely toward the disabled citizen, as the intern did. It is hoped that the Chair will mature with time and gain respect for disabled persons. At least as much as she pretends to have for other women and minorities.

The Cable Chair's supporters operate a statewide organization within the state bureaucracy for the benefit of the members of the group. The current leader of this group (the President of the University of Mass) contributed to the recent state rep campaign of the Chair of the Cable TV Committee, who is well connected politically.

The latest violation of state law at CCTV, was on and before Saturday March 8, 2003. For more than one year, CCTV is closed on Saturdays. But on March 8, 2003 a four hour live broadcast was permitted by the Executive Director who was on the premises. Her personal project of International Women's Day was given special consideration by allowing this four-hour live, and four more hours for a later rebroadcast, for a total of eight hours on March 8, 2003. This production was reportedly arranged by Mary Leno, CCTV member and contributor; and a member of the Cambridge Women's Commission.

The four-hour live production was announced in the *Cambridge Chronicle* on Wednesday March 5, 2003; and in the Cable TV listings in the *Cambridge TAB* on Friday March 7, 2003. This was well planned. Other productions are not given the same promotional efforts by the staff.

This special privilege is never allowed for other political movements, issues, persons or projects. My numerous requests to address the issue of persons with disabilities with a theme month was rebuffed and ignored by the Executive Director repeatedly. Her response was to recruit a woman who uses a wheelchair to be on the Board of Directors.

This disabled woman is a willing toady of the Executive Director, along with others on the Board. This woman told me that she supports the Executive Director no matter what the issue. This creates an image that CCTV does not discriminate toward persons with disabilities. Ahem!

CCTV is run as Saddam Hussein runs Iraq, with no opposition, and for the personal benefit of the Executive Director and her cronies. This is a criminal offense, a violation of the state ethics laws.

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This is an example of a group, women, which claims to be oppressed; that denies access to a community media outlet that they control. It is ludicrous, a reflection of art in life; comparable to George Orwell's *Animal Farm* when the pigs took over the farm.

The failure of the City Council to address criminal abuses and to punish wrongdoing at CCTV encourages the wrongdoers, and shows that the Council approves of the perversions; or that they have no spine. Just because the Council and the City Manager support the political issue, does not mitigate the unlawful behavior, misuse of the CCTV facilities for personal and political purposes.

By allowing this misuse of the CCTV facilities, the Council sets a dangerous precedent. Whoever controls the station may use it for his or her personal interests excluding any competing issues and ideas from having an equal hearing. That was the idea behind the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, and the First Amendment. Currently CCTV is used for propaganda by the dominant political majority.

I am aware that the state prefers that abuses be addressed by the City; and prefers that the City be given an opportunity to do so. As of this date none of the previous complained about unlawful abuses have been redressed. The Executive Director continues her arrogant actions without any accountability from the Board of Directors, the City Council or the City Manager.

The intern continues in her position, making a hostile environment for a volunteer producer's presence. The absence of punishment to the Executive Director shows that she believes that she is above the laws for the rest of Cambridge residents.

Please take notice that this is a criminal violation of state law. This serves as notice for the City of these unaddressed criminal and unlawful abuses. Thank you for your attention.

Ry Bercaw

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Communication #13

A communication was received
from Roy Bercaw, regarding
CCTV.

In City Council March 17, 2003

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