

Miss Suranne Jones v Daily Sport

Clauses noted: 3

Miss Suranne Jones complained to the Press Complaints Commission through Granada Television that an article headlined "Suranne is the randiest girl I've ever met" published in the Daily Sport on 22 May 2003 intruded into her privacy in breach of Clause 3 (Privacy) of the Code of Practice.

The complaint was upheld.

The complainant is an actress in Coronation Street. A former boyfriend had spoken to the newspaper and provided an explicit account of their relationship. The complainant said that the article contained an intrusive level of detail and that she had been distressed by the invasion into her privacy.

The newspaper said that both it and the News of the World had, when the complainant joined the cast of Coronation Street three years previously, published similar accounts of the relationship without objection from the complainant. It said that the article was true and questioned the complainant's motives in complaining now about the sort of material that she had previously allowed to pass without complaint.

Granada Television said that the complainant had not read the previous articles – at the request of her parents – but explained that in any case they were not as explicit.

Adjudication

The Commission noted that the newspaper had advanced no defence for publication other than that the complainant had not previously complained about pieces that it regarded as similar. While the Commission has made clear that people should complain whenever material is published that they consider to be intrusive, it must balance whether the extent of an individual's previous acquiescence in stories about their private life is sufficient to justify a newspaper publishing further intrusive material about them. In this case the subject matter was of the most personal nature and graphically described. There was no public interest in the material. In these circumstances the complainant's failure to complain three years ago about a small number of interviews with the same ex-boyfriend was not a sufficient reason to justify the publication of such an intrusive article. This was a serious and unjustifiable breach of the Code and the Commission had no hesitation in upholding the complaint.

Adjudication issued 2003