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No Nudes Is Good Nudes For Cablers

Producers of a couple of sex-oriented shows for New York's public access channels on cable tv are charging censorship by Sterling-Manhattan and Teleprompter, the two systems that split Manhattan service.

Michael C. Luckman, producer of the "Underground Tonight Show," has filed a letter of complaint with the FCC charging illegal censorship by the two companies.

Bruce David, producer of Milky Way Productions' "Screw Magazine of the Air," told *Variety* that Manhattan-Sterling has hacked up a show even after the cable firm's own lawyers had approved the content.

In a letter to FCC Cable Bureau

chief David Kinley, Luckman has asked for hearings "for the purpose of revoking the licenses of both Sterling-Manhattan and Teleprompter."

Says Luckman, "FCC regulations expressly prohibit cable companies from exercising any kind of control over users of the public access channels, except in the case of obscenity."

What prompted Luckman's charges to FCC was the cable firm's refusal to run an "Underground Tonight" segment featuring a half-hour demonstration of male masturbation. Sterling-Manhattan said at the time that the segment was in violation of the New York obscenity laws.

Redeeming Values

Luckman says that only last May, Sterling-Manhattan veepee Charlotte Jones defended the right to broadcast an "Underground Tonight" show on female masturbation on grounds it had socially redeeming values. Teleprompter backed out, claiming the seg was obscene.

At the same time, Milky Way Productions has labeled Sterling-Manhattan's blackout of a show featuring a woman having her pubic hairs clipped in a beauty parlor an "outrage." The whole show was zapped after the opening four minutes leading up to the beauty parlor seg.

David says the show had the approval of Sterling-Manhattan lawyers. He says Milky Way has always been fully cooperative with S-M's demands, supplying the show tape a week in advance, and themselves cutting segments disapproved by the company.

In one of the latter instances, Milky Way blacked out a show's closing seg featuring a stripper with a monkey mask because S-M said it was prurient and lewd. But while the stripper was excised on access Channel C, an Anton Perich show featuring a naked woman in a bathtub douching and shaving her legs was rolling on Channel D.