



June 8, 2016

Mr. Robert Greenblatt
Chairman, NBC Entertainment
NBC Universal
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10112

OPEN LETTER PROTESTING THE AIRING OF “KIDNAPPING VIDEO”
ON THE “MAYA AND MARTY SHOW” JUNE 7, 2016

Dear Mr. Greenblatt:

I am writing this letter, which will also be posted on my organization’s website and distributed to our constituents, to protest in the strongest possible terms the airing of the sketch “Kidnapping Video” on the “Maya and Marty Show” last night (June 7, 2016).

By way of background, 31 years ago I founded a non-profit organization with a mission that includes providing *pro bono* hostage negotiation services to kidnap victims and their families around the world (most in cases of hostage-taking by international terrorist groups). At this point in history I am told that I am one of the most experienced international hostage negotiators in the world. I was invited to be a subject matter expert during the White House review of US hostage policies last year; I am a guest instructor in the FBI’s hostage negotiation training programs, and recently received an award for “Exceptional Service in the Public Interest” by FBI Director Comey in recognition of my efforts in over 100 overseas hostage negotiations. I believe I am qualified to comment on this topic.

Choosing to exploit the tragedy and desperation hostages and their families feel to make a joke of the cold, brutal and manipulated process of forcing hostages to make videos is simply wrong and unacceptable. It displays a callous lack of concern, compassion and decency towards the individuals who find themselves in these tragic situations. Depicting a hostage helping his kidnapper make a “better” video, asking his kidnapper to inflict more wounds to him for the sake of the camera images – these are as repugnant as they are repulsive.

As one who has had to show these videos to family members I can tell you that there is NOTHING funny about them. They are exploitive, manipulative and cruel. Sometimes they are far worse than that. I would be willing to show you several if you doubt the accuracy of my description.

The sketch "Kidnapping Video" was in incredibly poor taste, exhibits no social responsibility or human accountability and is a deep, deep insult to every hostage and to every member of a hostage's family who has had to endure the pain of experiencing a real video in these circumstances.

Mr. Greenblatt, this happened on your watch. I cannot imagine how such a sketch survived whatever review or editorial process that should weed out this type of material, but ultimately it is your responsibility. I would think that the only decent thing NBC Universal can do at this point is to admit that this was a huge error and express your apologies for broadcasting it. Those directly responsible for this sketch being broadcast should be held accountable. I urge you to do so just as soon as possible.

Thank you for receiving this letter. If you would like to review "real" videos of this type or desire any more information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Klamser". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bob Klamser
Founder and Executive Director, Crisis Consulting International