

S. C. W. P.

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Brideshead not entirely Revisited

By JOHN McLEAN

Every week Zung Fu brings ATV viewers Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* — as its commercial blurb goes — "in its entirety." But not quite entirely.

What Hongkong *Brideshead* buffs did not see during Sunday's episode was a particularly steamy love scene on board a trans-Atlantic steamer.

The Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority was not entirely happy with

these nautical naughty bits, involving Charles Ryder (played by Jeremy Irons) and Lady Julia Flyte (Diana Quick), in the original Granada Television production.

As the authority's chief entertainment standards control officer (television monitoring and research), Miss M. Wu, rather appropriately remarked yesterday: "It is really going overboard."

So the authority ordered ATV to cut the 60-second scene from the episode.

Their chopping list read: "A shot of the side view of a woman's breast; scenes of 'sex movements'; and frontal shots of a woman's nipples."

So between the scenes of Ryder's hurricane courtship of Lady Julia, and shots of him sheepishly emerging, dinner jacket over his arm, from her cabin, it was all left to the viewers' imaginations.

"We are very strict on nudity and the portrayal of sex on television," Miss Wu said.

But the authority's strict-

ness did not please some viewers, who, having seen the uncut version elsewhere, were obviously keen to see the whole thing again.

They deluged RTHK's *Open Line* programme yesterday with protests about the cuts — although ATV received no complaints.

Another opponent was Mr Peter Paice, chief executive of Zung Fu.

"It is a great pity, because I did not actually feel the scenes were pornographic or indecent," he said.

But he stressed that this

was a personal opinion, and admitted that the scenes might have been offensive to Hongkong tastes.

Did the cuts detract from the series' artistic integrity?

"We did consider this before we made the cuts," said Miss Wu, "and we feel such cuts are necessary not to upset the general public."

"We cannot make any special allowances."

Despite this, viewers have already been treated to a couple of flashes of naked flesh.

Early on in the series we (Cont'd on Page 16, Col 7)

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had a back view of the nude Irons and Anthony Andrews during a rooftop sunbathing session, and only recently we had a fleeting glimpse of a party-goer wandering around wearing nothing but a wine glass.

ATV got away with those shots and sparked complaints.

It was after receiving complaints that the authority decided to have a look at what *Brideshead* had in store for the unsuspecting Hongkong public.

The authority does not automatically preview television shows. Instead, it relies on spot checks and the television stations' own self-control.

"We really think the stations should do their own monitoring," said Miss Wu. "They have this responsibility to keep their own screens clean."

And ATV goes along with this.

"Usually, on the English channel, we are pretty good in cutting out what is not desirable," a spokesman said.

It was only when people began telephoning the authority to complain about the sunbathing scene that the authority realised something was wrong.

"To receive a number of calls is quite extraordinary for us."

So the authority had a quiet word with ATV.

However, it was not until later, when the birthday-suited Bohemian drifted across the screen, that the authority decided to step in and preview the series — or, rather, the remainder of it.

"We were actually amazed to find shots of nudity," said Miss Wu.

And ATV had to make the cuts.

"We did not have any choice," the spokesman said.

Zung Fu has made much of its claim that the series is "brought to you in its entirety."

So are those viewers who were looking forward to seeing, literally, everything being conned?

Not officially. ATV's spokesman, Zung Fu's Mr Paice and Hongkong's television advertising watchdog all agree that viewers should interpret "in its entirety" as meaning that the episodes are uninterrupted by commercial breaks.