**INDECENCY QUOTIENT**

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Program:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What’s your Indecency IQ? Be an FCC Commissioner-for-A-Day and test your knowledge about how the FCC interprets and enforces the indecency rule. Twenty-five correct answers qualifies you as a Master of Indecency. One wrong, and you’re guilty of an indecent utterance, for which you could be fined up to $32,500 ($500,000, if Congress has its way). More than three wrong, and you’ve sunk into the Indecency Quagmire—you risk possible revocation of your license.

1. The FCC is concerned only about “bits,” routines, and call-ins or call-outs that dwell on sexual content, like the couple that “coupled” in St. Patrick’s Cathedral.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

2. The FCC will slam me for cussing in Czech.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

3. It is okay to use “code words” for body parts and sexual acts.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

4. Profanity counts even if it goes out over the air by mistake, like if a mike is left on.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

5. There is an exception for profanity that comes from practical jokes station personalities play on each other.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

6. Even though listening drops off significantly after afternoon drive, the FCC still cares about indecency in the evening hours.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

7. What “plays” in Philadelphia may not in Fresno, so where a station is located has an impact on whether a broadcast is indecent.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

8. Song titles mentioned on the air, like “Fuck It,” are not exempt from indecency prosecution.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

9. There is a limited exemption for lyrics of songs, like “Fuck what I said it don’t mean shit now,” so long as they are sung or spoken by the artist performing the song.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

10. The FCC has a news exemption for serious reporting of bona fide news events, so profanity heard in the background of a report on a rock concert would not be subject to prosecution.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

11. Even if a joke or bit has a genuine association, like celebrating Thomas Crapper’s birthday with some toilet humor, the FCC could come down on it.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

12. There is no need to worry about lyrics in “classic” songs like “Louie Louie.”

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

13. The FCC distinguishes between a live broadcast of, for example, a rock concert, and the broadcast of a concert previously recorded. There may be no excuse for profanity heard in the recorded version since it can be edited for broadcast, but the live broadcast is forgivable.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

14. A little indecency could be regarded as an acceptable risk from a cost-benefit standpoint, if the show is profitable.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

15. Under the First Amendment, air talent cannot be personally fined for indecent speech.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

16. If a listener wrote me upset about my telling an off-color joke on the air, I don’t have to report her complaint to the FCC.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

17. A listener sent an Eminem recording to the FCC that he claimed he heard on our station, but since we play only edited “cleansed” versions of popular music, we won’t be fined.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

18. The FCC won’t even give you a break if something that was said on the air is a double entendre, or has a double meaning, one of which is “clean.”

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

19. Double entendres in a foreign language are safe, like “Están cambiando el aceite” (“they’re changing the oil” for a couple having sex).

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

20. The FCC will probably give us a break if we’re the obvious target of a malicious letter and email-writing campaign resulting in hundreds of identical complaint “forms” being sent in.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

21. The FCC will excuse exclamations uttered by winners on a live call-in contest line, like “Holy shit!”

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

22. One of the infamous Seven Dirty Words has now become so accepted and commonplace in our language that it has been taken off the list.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

23. If one morning show contains six different indecent “utterances,” the FCC will consider fining the station for six violations, not just one.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

24. If a morning show is syndicated on 50 stations, an indecent episode might result in 50 prosecutions, not just one.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE

25. If it’s a network broadcast, the FCC won’t go after the local station.

\_\_\_ TRUE \_\_\_ FALSE