

The Boxer

was produced by the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (). The Boxer is the story of eight year old Selma who really wants a dog, but her parents tell her she is too young. Out in the woods, she finds the boxer Bulle, trapped in his own leash. Selma smuggles Bulle into her room without her parents noticing it. Finally she has her own dog! But what about Bulle's real owner?

The Boxer is a story about wanting something so bad that you forget everything else, and about how hard it is to hide a secret which weighs 88 pounds, leaves a pooh on the stairs, eats 16 sausages at a time and needs to be taken for a walk several times a day.

The Boxer was one of the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2010 finalists in the “up to 6 fiction” category.

International experts' opinions

Many international experts loved the program and admired it for various aspects. “I think it was a good story and a good script and well made – also nice that it took time. It is like 26 minutes. I think it was a really good story for children” (male expert, Sweden). “I liked it; I thought it was a lovely story” (female expert, Australia). They liked the humour in the program. “I liked it very much: I could feel with her. I liked the humour in the story. Not all of the stories had humour that we have seen, but this one had” (female expert, Germany).



Figure 1: Selma loves dogs but her parents do not allow her to have one.

However, some thought that the story was not too well done. “I like it very much, but I feel like it is constructed. The thing about the dog, and I didn't quite get how she got the dog” (female expert, Denmark). Some found the story confusing. “Yeah, it was a kind of cliffhanger there in the end with the old lady” (male expert, Sweden). There were objections to the message of the story. “Even just going up to a strange dog – it is like you cannot really do that” (male expert, USA). “That is what I was going to say: you teach preschoolers not to go to strange animals” (female expert, USA).



Figure 2: Selma hang pictures of dogs all over her bedroom wall.

Some of the experts raised concerns regarding whether the program was made for the right target audience and asked: “I just have a question. Was this in the right age group?” (female expert, Australia). Some did not find the program appropriate for the target audience. “This drama fit very well in with the dramas we saw for seven-to-eleven: *Lukas*, *Habib*. To me, it was very much in the same genre as the seven-to-elevens, although, I would love to see the next two episodes” (female expert, USA). However, others disagreed and felt that the program was age appropriate. “For me, it was for the right age group, but what I did like was the attempt to give this age group a live action drama of the same complexity and quality that we



Figure 3: Selma is disappointed at her parents' gift.



Figure 4: Selma gets angry with her parents for being too busy with the newborn baby.



Figure 5: Selma finds a dog in the woods and decides to take him home.

expect for the older age groups and as adults – which you don't see very often" (female expert, Australia).

The international experts also discussed the character of the boy and the girl in the program. They liked the character of the girl. "And the girl was so good" (female expert, Denmark). "I like the jealous part from the girl. When I was just getting to my family, my older sister put a needle in my sleeping bed, because she was jealous. That part touched me, because (Laughter), and when she doesn't get her dog, it was like, whoa, she needs a dog, because she needs more attention and everything" (female expert, Chile).

There was a lot of debate about the character of the boy who was a "nice terrorist." They loved the character of the boy. "It was amazing that the boy who actually wanted to be a terrorist was a sympathetic boy. He was not annoying or anything. I think that was so very, very good. It was interesting with a boy that

was – I almost fell in love with him" (female expert, Denmark). "I was just envious that they got to let the little boy be into guns and terrorists and stuff like that. For me, it is really genuine" (male expert, Canada). Some thought it was the direct effect of the media: "About the terrorism: I think that it is now in the media a lot; so it is kind of being the cowboy or something like that. That represents our age. That is how little kids kind of try to imitate" (female expert, Chile).

The program, however, raised a lot of curiosity, as one female expert from Colombia expressed regarding the end of the program. "I would like to know what happened afterwards. My great concern was that the dog was going to pee and fool around and then he would be found. I know there is another telling what happened."



Figure 6: Selma takes the dog to her bedroom without her parents' permission.



Figure 7: Selma hides the dog underneath her bed.

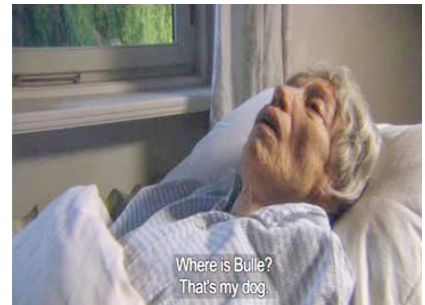


Figure 8: The dog's real owner wakes up in a hospital and finds that his dog was missing.

Screenshots from *The Boxer* © NRK

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