

CI 1942 B Chant

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Q1:

The classification system is quite dated, I believe it needs to be rebuilt from the ground up. It has its roots several decades in the past, and has not adapted to rapid changes in forms of media and how they are consumed.

Q2:

The primary objectives should be standardisation, modernisation, and simplification.

Ratings should be standardised across media. Currently there is no way to know what age a music recording or radio program may be appropriate for. There also needs to be standardisation across the states and territories: there shouldn't be an arbitrary limitation on the availability of high impact material based on your geographical location.

Ratings need to be modernised. The R18+ for games debate centres around a system that was devised a long time ago, for conditions that simply don't exist any more. Games can be quite realistic, gamers are mostly adults, and the system doesn't reflect that.

Finally, ratings need to be simplified. Decrypting a TV, movie, or game rating needs a prior understanding of that G, PG, M, MA, R, and X mean. You need to be made aware in advance that something rated M15+ could be OK for a teenager, but MA15+ most likely won't be. A simple age number system like the UK's takes the guess work out.

Q3:

Yes. Any "micro transaction" platform, whereby content is sold in small pieces on a regular basis, would be severely hindered by the requirement of putting content through a bureaucratic review and classification process. For these types of content, a voluntary system needs to be available, with a complaints facility available to keep content publishers accountable. The technology doesn't necessarily matter, because these kinds of transactions can be conducted from phones, tablets, laptops, desktops, TVs, games consoles, and so forth.

Q4:

As per my answer to Q3, certain types of media have a development/production cycle that is too short for a bureaucratic review and classification process to work. For these types of media, complaints are necessary to keep the voluntary system accountable. So yes.

Q5:

I think the very reason classification exists is to advise consumers of the level of impact, so yes. Content designed for children should carry a guarantee that the content is in fact age appropriate. This can fit within a voluntary system for certain types of media.

Q6:

These particular factors should not impact on the eligibility of content for classification. If the release cycle allows for a formal review and classification process, it should be enforced.

Q7:

Certainly. As with any form of media, artworks need to have their impact considered, and consumers need to be advised appropriately. Access restriction should be similar to those at a cinema, where minors must be accompanied by adults.

Q8:

Indeed, words can carry profound impact messages, just as television or film. The process for evaluating content may be different, but age guidelines are just as applicable.

Q9:

I think that a content publisher may choose to voluntarily classify their adult-oriented material into the R18+ or X18+ levels (or a general 18+ rating under a reformed system). This removes the need for a formal review and classification process, and ensures that only adults may access that material.

Q10:

Before material reached the home it must be purchased, rented, or otherwise obtained, so yes.

Q11:

All content should be classified, however certain kinds of material would be disadvantaged by the classic review and classification process. There needs to be a great deal of reform, but I believe there could be a system where all content can be easily identified for age-appropriateness by parents or other care givers.

Q12:

Parental education is the only real way to ensure children are not accessing age-inappropriate material. For example, encourage families to keep their computers in a common area of the home. Adults are entitled to view any lawful content without interference, and any level of filtering outside the control of the adult is an interference.

Q13:

Through parental education, as per Q12.

Q14:

ID checks on purchase, as occurs already.

Q15:

At the point of purchase.

Q16:

Government agencies have the role of establishing guidelines for what is age appropriate at each level, reviewing submitted material, and responding to complaints.

Industry bodies have the role of ensuring products are labelled according to legislation, and submitting content before publishing it.

Users are responsible for ensuring minors in their care do not access age-inappropriate material.

Q17:

Yes, I believe that would result in a set of guidelines that better reflects modern society than what exists at present.

Q18:

Adult oriented content. Industry should be able to say "This is for 18+ people only." and have that restriction enforced. Having content OK'ed for younger ages requires a more formal review, except in cases as described in my answer to Q3/Q4.

Q19:

If small independent films are not willing to voluntarily classify their films for adults 18+, then a subsidised review process should be available, yes.

Q20:

I think what exists now is reasonably well understood. Not because it's particularly straightforward, but because it's been around for so long. I think there is confusion around M15+/MA15+, and around R18+/X18+. They are both appropriate for 15 year olds, or 18 year olds respectively, with only subtle differences between them regarding impact.

Q21:

Under the current system, I would merge M15+ & MA15+, and R18+ and X18+. I would remove "Refused Classification" and replace it with a warning, stating that the content is of extremely high impact, and serious discretion is advised. Of course, this doesn't change that illegal content, such as sexual depiction of minors, material that encourages or assists with committing crime, should remain illegal. The point being that "refused classification" shouldn't prevent consenting adults from accessing content that is otherwise lawful.

Q22:

Move away from initials that stand for subjective words like "mature", towards something objective like a number.

Q23:

Frankly, they need to not only be consolidated, but rewritten ground up to be less subjective, and stay away from ambiguous phrases like "things a reasonable adult might consider offensive".

Q24:

Access to content should not be prohibited, as that is tantamount to censorship. There are already methods to address individuals who access harmful material. It is already illegal to possess child pornography, it is already illegal to research how to commit crimes, these are matters for the police, not for the classification board.

Q25:

No. It is far too vague and subjective.

Q26:

Q27:

A national scheme with consistent labelling requirements, and a safe, controlled way for adults to access content that is currently refused classification.

Q28:

I see no reason in the digital age that the laws need to be different between states on this matter. A national approach is needed to accommodate the ease with which content can cross borders.

Q29:

Improved handling of content that exceeds the R18+ rating in movies, and the MA15+ rating in games. Currently such content is banned without further consideration, even though it is otherwise

lawful, and could be enjoyed by adults given the opportunity. R18+ and X18+ for games is a given, there is little community or industry support for the current MA15+ limit. Finally, unifying the states and territories in permitting content with the X18+ classification to be sold to adults bearing appropriate ID. It is not the prerogative of the government or the classification board to dictate taste or decency, only to advise the consumer of the impact, no matter how high.

Other comments: