

CI 400 B Lever

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Q1:

Improving elements of the existing framework.

Q2:

To provide clear classifications that allow adults to make informed choices about the media they consume, and the media the children in their care consume. Making these choices for the adults should not be the goal of the scheme.

Q3:

The internet renders the notion of controlling access to content obsolete. While the Classification Scheme should seek to provide a means of informing citizens in their choices where possible, it should acknowledge the severity of its limitations, and should not impose laughably ineffectual, but incredibly frustrating, attempts to regain this control - most notably, ISP filters.

Q4:

Since, as I suggested in Q3, it is unfeasable to attempt to classify and control all the content on the internet, this is indeed a good way of prioritising which internet content should be classified first. I want to stress again, however, that the result of this classification should only be to inform and not dictate.

Q5:

Both these questions are extremely poorly worded, in what I can only assume is an attempt at obfuscation. As a general statement, however, potential impact is a notoriously difficult thing to test, and banning something because of the impact something "might" have is particularly fraught when you consider the many misleading studies that have been released, most notably in relation to the correlation between movie violence and real-world violence (or video game violence and same)

Q6:

Again, in a market like the internet where trying to classify everything is effectively impossible, this can be a useful heuristic to detect which content most deserves attention. If media is more popular and more readily available, it is more likely that an adult will want to use the classification data you would provide; therefore your services are better directed to this media than less-available media. This is, I want to stress, a matter of pragmatism and not of principle; popular content does not inherently require closer monitoring because of its popularity.

Q7:

By definition you cannot say that "some" artworks must be required; whatever criteria you are suggesting be used to determine whether an artwork deserves classification are themselves a form of classification.

Q8:

It should be classified in the same way that other content should be; with appropriate labels to allow informed choices.

Q9:

Q10:

Q11:

Q12:

I reject the premise of the question. Online content should not be restricted.

However, providing a free PC-level filter for adults who wish to install one (for themselves or their children), as was the case under previous governmental arrangements, is an excellent idea, as is improved education about cyber safety.

Q13:

Put simply: by you, it cannot be. All you can do is provide parents with the tools to restrict their access - when I say 'tools', software is only a tiny portion of what I mean; parental supervision, and knowing what signs to look for, are much more important. Any electronic barriers you put in place will be disassembled by children with the greatest of ease, especially if they are barriers designed to be permeable to those over the age of 18; physically present parents are the only way to mediate children's usage of the internet.

Q14:

As far as I'm aware the current setup, with newsagents checking IDs, and with opaque packaging around explicit materials, works fairly well. However, the way the content of magazines is controlled is absolutely despicable.

Q15:

Q16:

The roles of government and industry should be diminished, with the focus being put more on the user. In a free, democratic society, an adult must be allowed to choose what they say and write, as well as what they hear and read. Governments (and, to an extent, industry) should play a role in providing classifications so adults can make informed decisions but they should not be judging; they should not be making the decision FOR the adults.

Q17:

Industry should probably be listened to much more closely (the video game industry and the pornographic magazine industry spring to mind as industries that have made clear, sensible recommendations that have been thoroughly ignored by government) but ultimately the decision must rest with a government body that can be regulated by democratic processes.

Q18:

Q19:

Classification of all content should be undertaken at government expense; at best, a small fee should apply to discourage spamming of applications. Being unable to afford to get something classified should not be any kind of a barrier to getting work published; there are already enough barriers in place.

Q20:

Q21:

Video games should have an R18 (and possibly even an X18) classification mirroring that of moving pictures. Currently several games that should be R18 are crammed into the MA15 category, and this should be rectified (in addition to allowing many previously RC games to be classified R18).

Q22:

Music could perhaps be labelled in a way that more closely mimics that of games and videos, but I don't see this as being a source of much confusion.

Q23:

Yes; classification should be as uniform across media as it can be.

Q24:

Child pornography is something that exists online and that should not be possessed or distributed by anyone. The legal framework for addressing this problem lies in criminal law, however, not censorship; funds otherwise used on pointless attempts at censorship, such as internet filtering, should be diverted to police forces who can target the actual criminals involved in such activity.

It is worth noting that Australia can only play its part in this; we can only target child pornographers on our soil, or on our servers, and to some extent assist overseas law enforcement agencies to arrest targets on their soil. Assuming that the eradication of child pornography is our goal because we are concerned for the child participants, no amount of filtering will have an effect on this - it will not stop the material from being made overseas in the first place, just from Australians watching it. And that's if we could find a way to effectively filter it, which we can't.

Q25:

No. There is much that would be now RC that is merely political dissent, and a government attempting to ban citizens from dissenting is morally reprehensible and betraying an intense fear of their electorate.

In addition, much of the pornography categorised as RC is done so for ridiculous reasons. Fetishes that are participated in consensually are branded as offensive and therefore banned; this is a value judgement the government should not be making. Depictions of female ejaculation are branded as urination; even if it were urination it would be no reason for the government to judge, but this is completely untrue, and is a recognised biological reaction to orgasm in women. Drawings of sexual

activity are often refused classification; given that these are just drawings and therefore cannot have come about via harm to actual participants, this is ludicrous.

Finally, and by far the most offensively, is the censorship applied to women's bodies. Films featuring skinny, flat-chested (adult) women are often banned because they 'appear underage' - this is incredibly sexist. It is based on an ideal of femininity that is voluptuous and curvaceous; by banning such films, the classification office is subscribing to and perpetuating this sexist stereotype, and actively damaging the body images of the women who view such material. Similarly, forcing pornographic magazines to either remove or photoshop any images that show the labia minora of a woman protruding at all has led to a lot of damage to women's body images, and a huge increase in the numbers of people having vaginoplasty to make their bodies conform to this unrealistic standard.

These practises not only unnecessarily restrict the viewing habits of adults but actively damage them, in the exact kind of way that much previous "for your own good" censoring was designed to prevent!

Q26:

Q27:

Q28:

Q29:

Other comments: