

CI 797 D Stevenson

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Q1:

The ALRC should develop a new framework for classification from the ground up which is does not differentiate classification based on media type and is able to be applied appropriately as a guide by the authors of the media, eliminating any "classification board" except as a point of review based on complaint for material intended to be shown at public institutions.

Q2:

The primary objective of a National Classification Scheme should be to move away from a centrally controlled, mandatory and morally dictatory "classification board" and move toward industry self classification, with any panel or board oversight provided on the basis of complaint.

This system should also only be required to sell or show publicly material within Australia to minors without the consent or presence of a guardian, in all other circumstances media should not be required to be classified.

Q3:

I do not believe that a classification scheme should be mandatory for any media intended for consumption by individuals over the age of 18 or consumed in the presence of guardians. It is not the role of any state body to inflict any particular moral standpoint on any viewer, be that standpoint related to violence, sex or religion.

Where there is method of communication rather than a media, such as telephones, the internet or any other transmission protocol, then it is appropriate to expect guardians to manage access to said communication and eliminate need for direct or real time censorship of this media. Typically children appear to be quite reasonable at self managing their own exposure to media, with an excellent example being a child who was recently exposed to a sexual predator in the form of a school chaplain;

<http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/story/2009/07/29/school-chaplain-removed-job/>

The child reported the inappropriate contact and the matter was turned over to the authorities, who appear to be making a hash of it. It is also an object lesson as to how the internet is not "media" so much as a pipeline. Unless you're expecting to be able to monitor everyones chats and emails?

Q4:

Only content intended for sale to minors which has already been rated by the author indicating it is appropriate for this should be reviewed on the basis of a complaint. It is inappropriate to attempt to censor anything that any particular individual has taken a personal dislike to, after all, they are quite able to stop consuming said media if they are offended by it, and prevent any minor in their charge from consuming it on the same basis.

Q5:

Media intended to be sold within Australia to minors without guardian supervision should be classified by the author. For all other media systems it is reasonable that any adult should be able to apply discretion intelligently and appropriately. Further, if an adult cannot manage their own exposure to media they find offensive then it is inappropriate to attempt to legislate a safety net for them.

Q6:

If a classification system is discretionary and only targeted at supplying information quickly and effectively to a consumer then it would be appropriate for all areas to self classify.

Q7:

No, viewers should be aware of the content and be intelligent to apply their own discretion in selecting appropriate viewing in any sense.

Q8:

Music should be self classified by authors in the same way as all other media.

Q9:

The intended audience should be considered and the author should rate the media appropriately, however it is not reasonable, or sane, to attempt to rate any media on the basis of who COULD get their hands on it.

Obvious examples include those where, for instance, movies demonstrate people drinking, which may be offensive to those who follow more strictly Sharia law. Attempting to eliminate all drinking from all movies on this basis would be somewhat insane. Much the same argument can be put for movies containing violence or sex scenes in a wider perspective, or those containing niche interest material.

Q10:

It is inappropriate to attempt to mandate classifications for items consumed privately by an individual. To do so is illogical on the basis that it implies or states that there is a person better able to judge what is offensive, scary or "dangerous" for an individual to consume than that individual.

Q11:

Whether it is intended to be sold or shown in public to children in Australia without oversight of a parent or guardian.

Q12:

Parents should be managing a child's exposure to the internet in the same way as they manage exposure to telephones and the like. This is demonstrated though the example provided in Q3, where a school chaplain behaved in a sexually predatory way toward a child from a school via an internet chat system. It is, of course, impossible as well as inappropriate to attempt to censor all conversations anywhere on any media to prevent this sort of thing, but it illustrates how parents should manage their children's exposure to transmission systems and protocols to prevent this from occurring.

Link provided again to limit need for cross reference;

<http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/story/2009/07/29/school-chaplain-removed-job/>

Q13:

By parents appropriately managing their children in much the same way children's access to sexual predators is controlled in shopping centres and public parks.

Q14:

Sexually explicit magazines are already restricted to people age 18 and over, this is enough.

Q15:

Immediately prior to display within a school, daycare or other public facility dealing with children without the presence of their guardian.

Q16:

Industry should provide a rating based on information provided by Government which is considered to be a guideline for selection of material unless that material is intended for display in a public place without the oversight of guardians. Government agencies should become involved in policing media only if said media is a recording of an actual crime (snuff films or actual rape).

Q17:

Yes, additionally, eliminating any absolute need to comply with any standard when material is targeted toward adults would assist in eliminating regulatory burden applied both by politicians playing football with particular pieces of media and also wowers attempting to stamp their particular moral branding on the world. (ie; the drinking vs Sharia law example above).

Q18:

All

Q19:

Classification should not be so onerous as to require anything more than a judgement call from the author.

Q20:

No, the "smearing" of classification brackets and the arbitrary treatment of sex and violence mean that films are often effectively classified according to a sliding scale which has moved from the ultra violent late 80's/early 90's to today whilst variously encompassing more or less nudity, more or less death, more or less graphic death, more or less adult themes etc. etc.

Q21:

merging of all 18+ categories as well as a move to eliminate consideration of "Refused Classification" material would eliminate arbitrary moralism and censorship from creeping downward into ratings as well as preventing issue motivated groups from using certain media as a wedge to push a barrow. This would obviously include adding an R18+ category for computer games.

Q22:

Simplify age group markings

Q23:

Yes, media is the same no matter how it is displayed. There is no better example of this than digital video, which may be stored on a DVD, supplied via broadband internet or used as a dynamic wall texture in a game. The method of viewing does not change the content, therefore having different guidelines for classification simply indicates that the Australian Lawmaking bodies are not able to identify the obvious.

Q24:

None, Adults should be capable of discerning what media they wish to consume and in the event that they have misjudged media they should be able to turn it off. If they are not, then this indicates a problem that a prohibition system is unable to fix.

Children should be appropriately overseen by adults in much the same way. While it may seem like an awesome idea to ban access to material on an arbitrary basis for children this can also be viewed as taking responsibility away from parents for monitoring their children's actions on the internet. This would, of course, then lead to questions about who is responsible if, for instance a child was abducted by a kidnapper whilst using "safe" internet.

Q25:

No, in fact the current RC category doesn't make sense in the broader community. The idea that certain media should not be consumed by any individual no matter their own opinion due to some ephemeral risk is directly contradicted by the present evidence that no member of the censorship panels which review and refuse this material classification are now, as a result of viewing this material, career criminals, predators (sexual or otherwise) or totally insane.

Q26:

The Commonwealth can use constitutional power to overrule state legislation on this issue, this should be done to make classification the material authors responsibility and not punishable as any offence.

Q27:

A centralised Federal scheme should be introduced giving authors the right to provide classification (or not) for their material and that material then be sold on that basis. This would also entail elimination of RC categories and penalties for sale etc, of this type of material.

Q28:

Yes, in any "committee" environment nobody is responsible and nothing gets achieved. This is extremely well demonstrated by the fact that the OFLC has failed to resolve the M15+/R18+ game issue over 5(?) years now and has referred the lot to the ALRC as a sort of a "too hard" side step.

Q29:

By eliminating mandatory classification and censorship.

Other comments:

While I'm sure that lawmakers have everyones best interests at heart while drowning the world in red tape, in this instance could you PLEASE consider allowing an individual to utilise their own discretion to manage their own viewing and that of their family in their own home?