

CI 1071 J Hoffman

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Q1:

The existing scheme requires improvement to further move towards an international standard. That is not to say that we should necessarily have the same morals or level of content as the rest of the world - but that the underpinning structure is similar.

Q2:

A standardised classification system for publications that is respectful of the rights of individuals to consume content that is not illegal, while providing a solid framework for the protection of minors from unsuitable content. There needs to be a scheme that allows producers, retailers and consumers with the necessary tools to do this.

Q3:

No. In the same way that each person may react differently to a piece of content, each person may react differently to a different platform. It is therefore unreasonable to assume that classifying different platforms will provide an accurate estimate of impact. The broader the classification system becomes, the easier it will be for people to understand. Ratings should be universal across all content.

Q4:

No, however in mediums where content is so vast that the proactive classification of each piece of content would be prohibitive, a reactive approach may be necessary.

Q5:

No. I don't honestly think it does now. To cater for the lowest common denominator in regards to classification would be a mistake. Knee-jerk reactions about the actions of a minority should not influence the classification of any form of media. A minority undertake dangerous and irresponsible actions while driving cars, but the solution is not to ban cars, but rather have a progressive system that reflects maturity and experience. The classification system needs to understand this.

Q6:

No. A classification loses its value if it is not universal across a range of products.

Q7:

No. I can't honestly believe that galleries and artists are unable to provide consumer information themselves.

Q8:

Yes.

Q9:

Not if 'potential' relates to a misconception or belief as opposed to reality. For example, violent movies and video games are not specifically marketed at children, yet the community belief seems to be otherwise.

Q10:

No

Q11:

Q12:

Internet Filtering at an ISP or Government level is a terrible substitute for either enforcing the takedown of abhorrent material (whether hosted locally or internationally - better government co-operation will help) or filtering at a local level. The simple fact is that most material currently refused classification is not distributed through protocols that a filter can target. A filter will instill a false sense of security, when it is already blatantly obvious that any filter is able to be circumvented easily.

I, and nobody I have ever known, has ever come across Refused Classification material accidentally.

Therefore, what sense is there in filtering content that:

- anyone who wants to view it will still be able to do so
- anyone who does not wish to view it won't come across it anyway

There is no doubt in the public's mind that there is some truly terrible material that is published and distributed on the internet. However, forcing this distribution through other protocols reduces the ability of law enforcement to find these criminals. I don't wish to view this material on the internet. But I don't want it to be because an easily-circumventable filter is in place - I want it to be because it's not there at all.

Q13:

There already exists a multitude of ways for parents to protect children from inappropriate content online. The previous Government made available a free (local) filter, free products are available anyway, and the takeup was incredibly low. This could indicate several situations:

- Parents aren't concerned about their children's access to inappropriate content on the internet
- Parents aren't technically savvy enough to install a filter

I suspect it is a combination of both of these points. However, it does not become the Government's obligation to take up this responsibility. There is not a universal right for children to have access to the internet at all. Monitoring a child's access is not difficult. Limiting a child's access is not difficult.

Parents need to take some responsibility - if they are not able to ensure safety for their children online, their children should not be online.

Q14:

Better enforcement of existing laws regarding sale to minors. In the same way that 'undercover' minors attempt to purchase tobacco and alcohol from retailers, the same should be true of classified material. Classification is not taken seriously by most retailers, and a large fine for providing inappropriate content to minors would be a major wake-up call.

Q15:

Whenever it is presented in a retail environment.

Q16:

Government agencies should provide the classification of material (in consultation with industry) as well as an expanded enforcement function.

Q17:

There is certainly an argument for this. Specific reasons for classification at a particular rating need to be provided to industry and open dialogue used to discuss problems.

Q18:

Books may fall into this category - as would material of a strongly graphic sexual or violent nature. If it is clear that a product should be available only to Adults, an R18+ rating should be self-imposed.

Q19:

Q20:

Classifications exist, are understood, but rarely adhered to. This is an enforcement issue.

Q21:

An R18+ classification (or higher) for video games is essential. There is absolutely no good reason for this not to occur.

Q22:

The existing symbols are easy to recognise - it is more the community's lack of use that is an issue.

Q23:

Yes

Q24:

Acts of harm towards children or other extreme content should be prohibited - but global enforcement is a far better option than a filter. Not a single option of filtering the internet has even been proposed (let alone tested) that would prevent access to this material, or even make it marginally more difficult.

Q25:

No, there is much material that is suitable for adults in the Refused Classification Category. No blanket filter should be placed on the internet for RC content.

Q26:

The requirement for classification categories to be changed requiring the agreement of all State Attorney Generals is outdated. A simple majority would be a much fairer requirement.

Q27:

Q28:

Yes

Q29:

Less prohibition of content in general, and more restricted categories for adults. A greater focus on enforcement and prosecution and less on blanket measures.

Other comments: