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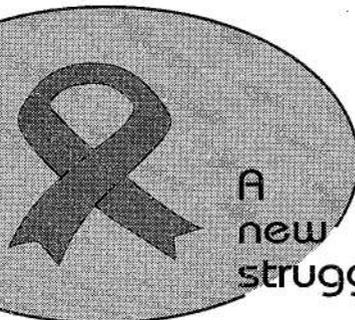
Vol. 416

PRETORIA, 25 FEBRUARY
FEBRUARIE 2000

No. 20935

We all have the power to prevent AIDS

AIDS
affects
us all



A
new
struggle

Prevention is the cure

**AIDS
HELPLINE**

0800 012 322

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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GOVERNMENT NOTICES

DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS

No. 198

25 February 2000

FILMS AND PUBLICATIONS ACT, NO. 65 OF 1996**FILM AND PUBLICATION BOARD
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1 Introduction

The Film and Publication Board (the "Board") was established in terms of section 3(a) of the *Films and Publications Act, No. 65 of 1996*. It is responsible for the classification of all films, videos, DVDs, computer games and publications intended for distribution and/or exhibition in South Africa. It does not, however, oversee television broadcasting, which is the responsibility of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa.

Section 31 of the Act requires the Board to draft classification guidelines based on :

- the principle that children must be protected against harmful and disturbing materials;
- the policy, derived from Schedule 8 of the Act, of imposing appropriate age restrictions; and
- the need to provide relevant consumer information in the public interest.

2 Call for feedback from the public

This pamphlet sets out the guidelines developed by the Board. The guidelines are used to classify films, computer games and publications. The pamphlet explains how the guidelines are used in classifying films.

We are publishing the guidelines to get your feedback. Our aim is to ensure that decisions of the Board :

- reflect generally-accepted community standards;
- strike a reasonable balance between competing constitutional freedoms, and
- protects children from disturbing and harmful materials.

The Board is inviting feedback from the public. Please send your comments to the **Chief Executive Officer, Film and Publication Board, Private Bag X9069, Cape Town 8000; or by fax to 021 - 465-6511; or by e-mail to fpbmail@yahoo.com by 30 April 2000.**

3 The Film and Publication Board

In apartheid South Africa, the old censorship authority had sweeping powers to ban books, films and other products. Such decisions were based on the world-view of a minority.

In the new democratic South Africa, the Board has a very different role: one of regulating and informing rather than control. Unlike the old body, the Board's membership is drawn from the whole range of the South African population.

The task of the Board is to classify all films (including DVDs and videos) and computer games intended for distribution and/or exhibition in South Africa. The Board does not classify publications unless a member of the public makes a complaint.

4 Guiding Principles

In classifying films, members of the Board use guidelines developed in accordance with the provisions of the *Films and Publications Act* and the human rights values of the Constitution, particularly the right to freedom of expression. Both the Constitution and the Act emphasise the need to protect children. In summary :

The Act prohibits pornography involving children. It is illegal not only to distribute or exhibit child pornography in South Africa but also to produce, import or possess it. No other kind of material is completely forbidden.

The Act also identifies two other categories of film or computer game which are subject to a high level of restriction: **X18** and **XX** material. **X18** material is for adults only and may be shown only in licensed adult premises. Films and computer games which focus mainly on gratuitous sex -- sex without any real context, story or art -- are classified **X18**.

Films and computer games classified as **XX** may not be distributed or exhibited in South Africa. This category applies to materials which could incite members of an audience to cause harm to others. It also applies to films and computer games containing explicit violent sex, sex with animals, degrading sexual conduct and extreme violence.

The guidelines for the **X18** and **XX** categories are set out in schedules attached to the *Films and Publications Act*. The guidelines published below are those developed by the Board for general, mainstream films and computer games. They set out the criteria used by the Board in determining what is harmful or disturbing to children and providing other consumer information in the public interest.

5 Classification and classifiable elements

A committee appointed from a panel of examiners and chief examiners looks closely at a film or computer game before classifying it. The film or computer game is examined as a whole. The context of potentially troubling scenes or parts is carefully considered.

Most importantly, the committee pays attention to a number of **classifiable elements**. These are: **violence, sex, nudity, language, and prejudice or negative stereotyping relating to race, ethnicity, gender or religion.**

The general rule is: **age restrictions depend on how often and how intensely these classifiable elements occur in a film or computer game.** The aim is to protect children from harmful or disturbing material.

Apart from imposing age restrictions to protect children, the Board also provides **consumer information**. This information is given to alert the public, particularly parents, to the fact that a film or computer game contains classifiable elements.

The letter **"V"** indicates that the film or computer game includes violent scenes. **"S"** indicates sex. **"L"** warns that the material contains strong language. **"N"** indicates nudity. **"P"** warns that the film

or computer game contains material that is biased or prejudiced in regard to race, gender, ethnicity or religion.

The **same film** may have **different classifications** in cinema and video or DVD forms. There are several reasons for this. Videos and DVD's are interactive. They can be stopped, put into slow motion, scenes can be played over and over again. Thus young people could learn criminal or harmful behaviour. On the other hand, images on the big screen can be more intense and frightening than on the home screen (eg. war films).

Classification guidelines will always be changing. As public tastes, attitudes and concerns shift, so guidelines will change in response. The Board will, therefore, publish guidelines for feedback annually.

6 Films

There are six categories for general or mainstream films. These range from "A", suitable for all ages, to "18" -- material judged unsuitable for anyone younger than 18 years of age.

The "A" and "PG" categories are advisory only. The others are legally restrictive. This means that it is illegal to allow a child younger than the given age restriction to see the film or hire the video.

"A" : *suitable for all ages*

Films in this category are suitable for all ages. They contain nothing considered harmful or disturbing to even very young children.

Theme	No themes are treated in a way that might threaten a child's sense of security or well-being.
Language	Strong language (swear-words, threats, abuse, profanity or prejudice) is rare and occurs only within context.
Drugs	There are no scenes condoning, promoting, glamorising or encouraging the use of drugs, including alcohol and cigarettes.
Prejudice	If the film contains any prejudice or negative stereotyping, the context makes it clear that such prejudice is wrong. The issue is resolved in a way that both supports human rights values and can be understood by even young children.
Nudity	If nudity occurs at all, it is brief and in context.
Sex	There may be brief scenes of implied sexual activity. But these are few and discreet. There are no close-ups and no frontal nudity in sexual scenes.

Violence There may be a few, brief scenes of minimal violence. But neither the victim nor the perpetrator are shown in the act of violence. Violence is not shown as a way to solve problems, nor is it dwelt upon in any detail. There may be mild threats, menace or suspense. But the context is clearly against violence. Weapons appear only in comic or fantastic settings.

Because films classified "A" contain few or no classifiable elements, no consumer information is provided for them.

Examples : *Rugrats "A"; Tea With Musolini "A"; You've Got Mail "A"*

"PG" : Parental Guidance

This is an advisory category. It warns parents that the film contains some material that might confuse or upset some younger children who watch it alone. While the film is judged suitable for children, parents are advised to monitor the contents, either by finding out more about the film or by watching it with their children.

Theme No themes are treated in a way that might threaten a child's sense of security or well-being. However, a "PG" classification without consumer information indicates that children may need parental guidance on the theme.

Language Strong language (swear-words, threats, abuse or prejudice) is rare. It occurs only within context.

Drugs There are no scenes condoning, promoting, glamorising or encouraging the use of drugs, including alcohol and cigarettes.

Prejudice If the film contains any prejudice or negative stereotyping, the context makes it clear that such prejudice is wrong. The issue is resolved in a way that both supports human rights values and can be understood by even young children.

Nudity There may be brief scenes of nudity. But these are in non-sexual contexts.

Sex There may be brief scenes of implied sexual activity. But these are few and discreet. There are no close-ups and no frontal nudity in sexual scenes.

Violence Brief scenes of violence may occur. But there are no prolonged or extreme images of violence (eg. a victim suffering, graphic close-ups, long shoot-outs). The film shows that violence has consequences. People who commit violence are punished or suffer remorse. The final outcome is positive. There may be mild threats, menace or suspense. Scenes of stronger violence occur only in clearly contextualised comic, historical, fantastical or natural disaster settings.

Consumer information is provided with most films classified "PG". This identifies classifiable elements which may require parental guidance for young children.

Examples : *Star Wars – The Phantom Menace* "PG"; *Shakespeare In Love* "PG (S)"; *Wild Wild West* "PG(LV)"

"10" : Not suitable for children under the age of 10 years

This is a legally restrictive classification. No child under the age of 10 years may be allowed to watch such a film in a cinema or rent such a video or DVD.

Theme	Themes may be complex but outcomes reinforce positive social values. The overall message is reassuring to a child's sense of security and well-being.
Language	There may be strong language (swear-words, threats, abuse or prejudice). But this occurs within the context of the story.
Drugs	Scenes of drug abuse may occur. But they are brief and within the context of the story. No instructional detail is given.
Prejudice	If bias or negative stereotyping occurs, it is resolved within the context of the story. The overall message supports human rights values.
Nudity	There may be a few brief scenes of nudity.
Sex	There may be scenes of implied sexual activity. But these are few and no physical details are shown.
Violence	Violent scenes may occur. But these do not last long and are neither graphic nor gory. They also take place in the context of the story. Violence is not shown as glamorous. Its consequences are clear. Where threat, menace or suspense occurs, it will not be disturbing to children of 10 years. Films classified "10" may contain references to violence against women and children, and sexual violence. But these will be minimal and the outcome will always support positive social values. Fantasy or non-realistic films may contain a greater number of violent scenes. But, again, the end result is victory for positive social values.

Consumer information is provided, depending on how often and how intensely classifiable elements occur.

Examples : *The Mod Squad* 10(L); *The Matrix* 10(V); *The Red Violin* 10(NS)

"13" : Not suitable for children under the age of 13 years

This is a legally restrictive classification. No child under the age of 13 years may be allowed to watch such a film in a cinema or rent such a video or DVD.

- Theme** Themes may be more adult than in films classified "10", "PG" or "A". They may include troubling social or moral issues. But such themes are handled with sensitivity. Outcomes are positive and viewers aged 13 will be able to understand this.
- Language** There may be some strong language, not always in context. There may also be language and dialogue suggesting or encouraging anti-social values. But this occurs in context. It is part of the unfolding of the plot or the development of characters.
- Drugs** There may be scenes of drug abuse. But these occur in context and with a positive outcome. There may be brief images of drug taking. But there is no instructive detail.
- Prejudice** Some scenes showing bias or negative stereotyping may occur. But these are within the context of the story and the outcome is positive. Human rights values are reinforced.
- Nudity** Some scenes of nudity may occur. These are within the context of the story or character development.
- Sex** There may be brief scenes of sexual activity. But they are related to the development of plot, theme or character. There is no suggestion of abuse, violence or exploitation in such scenes.
- Violence** Some scenes of realistic and intense violence may occur. But such violence is in a meaningful context, forming part of plot or character development. Graphic or gory details (eg. repeated close-ups) are minimal.
There are no scenes glamorising or condoning violence. Scenes of domestic and psychological violence, including sexual threat, may occur. But only in the context of the theme and only if the outcome supports positive social values.

Consumer information is provided, depending on how often and how intensely classifiable elements occur.

Examples : *Bride of Chucky "13(SV)"; Sixth Sense "13(V)"; There's Something About Mary "13(L)"*

"16" : Not suitable for children under the age of 16 years

This is a legally restrictive classification. No one under the age of 16 may be allowed to watch such a film in a cinema or rent such a video or DVD.

- Theme** Themes tend to be more adult than in films classified "13", "10", "PG" or "A". They may include troubling social or moral issues.

Language	Strong language may be used.
Drugs	Scenes of drug use may occur but without instructive detail. There are no scenes condoning, glamorising or encouraging the use of drugs.
Prejudice	There may be scenes showing bias and negative stereotyping. There might not necessarily be a positive outcome in the plot development.
Nudity	There may be scenes of nudity, including close-ups. But the context is not sexually exploitative.
Sex	Scenes of sexual activity may occur within the context of the story.
Violence	There may be scenes of intense violence. But these occur within context. They are part of the development of plot or character, or illustrate dramatic events.

Consumer information is provided, depending on how often and intensely classifiable elements occur.

Examples : *Saving Private Ryan "16(V)"; End of Days "16(LPV)"; American Beauty "16"*

"18" : Not suitable for persons under the age of 18 years

This is a legally restrictive classification. No one under the age of 18 may be allowed to watch such a film in a cinema or rent such a video or DVD.

Theme	A variety of adult themes are possible.
Language	Strong language may be used often.
Drugs	There may be scenes of drug abuse. But these are in the context of the story or character development.
Prejudice	There may be scenes showing bias and negative stereotyping. There might not necessarily be a positive outcome in the plot development.
Nudity	There may be prolonged scenes of nudity. If the context is sexual, there is no focus on genital contact.
Sex	Scenes of sexual activity may occur but none involving children. There is no bestiality and no extreme sexual violence. There is also no sexual violence of a kind that might incite viewers to cause harm to others.
Violence	There may be scenes of sustained and graphic violence. The outcome is not necessarily positive.

Consumer information is provided, depending on how often and how intensely classifiable elements occur.

Examples : *Fight Club "18(V)"; Eyes Wide Shut "18"; Boondock Saints "18(LPV)"*

7 Interactive Computer Games

There are four categories for interactive computer games: "A", "13", "16" and "18". These categories have nothing to do with how easy or difficult a game is. Like the classifications for films, they are based on how often and how intensely classifiable elements occur.

"A" : suitable for all ages

Games classified "A" contain nothing that could be considered harmful or disturbing to children of any age. But parental supervision may be needed by very young children.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Language | There may be occasional crude language (eg. "damn"). But there are no sexual expletives or profanities. |
| Drugs | No depictions of drug taking occur. There is no encouragement of criminal or anti-social behaviour. |
| Prejudice | The game contains no bias or negative stereotyping in regard to race, ethnicity, gender or religion. |
| Nudity | There are no scenes of nudity. |
| Sex | There are no references to sexual activity. |
| Violence | There may be minimal violence in playful, comic or highly stylised settings. There may be sequences of mild horror. There are no sequences that will threaten a child's sense of security or well-being. |

"13" : Not suitable for children under the age of 13 years

This category of game is restricted to children aged 13 and older. No child under the age of 13 may be allowed to buy or rent such a game, or play it in a public arcade.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Language | There may be occasional use of strong language. |
| Drugs | There are no depictions of drug abuse, including alcohol and cigarettes. There is no encouragement of anti-social behaviour. |
| Prejudice | No bias or negative stereotyping occurs. |
| Nudity | There are no sequences of gratuitous nudity. |

- Sex There may be mildly provocative sexual themes. But there is no focus on sexual activity and no sequences of sexual abuse.
- Violence Sequences of mild violence may occur, with the protagonist shown in unsafe or violent situations. But there are no graphic or gory deaths and no mutilation or dismemberment of animal or human bodies.

"16" : Not suitable for children under the age of 16 years

Games classified "16" are restricted to children aged 16 and older. No one under the age of 16 may be allowed to buy or rent such a game, or play it in a public arcade.

- Language There may be strong language.
- Drugs No sequences glamorise the use of drugs or other criminal behaviour.
- Prejudice If negative stereotyping occurs, it does not promote or encourage hatred based on race, gender, ethnicity or religion.
- Nudity There may be instances of nudity but these are in context and not gratuitous.
- Sex There may be mature sexual themes. But there are no sequences of sexual abuse or threats. There are no scenes which link sexual activity with violence.
- Violence The game may include sequences of intense violence in graphic detail. Mutilation and dismemberment may occur in animated contexts.

"18" : Not suitable for persons under the age of 18 years

This category of game is restricted to persons aged 18 and older. No one under the age of 18 may be allowed to buy or rent such a game, or play it in a public arcade.

- Language There may be very strong language.
- Drugs Sequences of drug abuse may occur.
- Prejudice Negative stereotyping may occur. But it does not promote or encourage hatred based on race, gender, ethnicity or religion.
- Nudity There may be frequent and prolonged sequences of nudity.
- Sex There may be sequences of sexual activity. But these are in context and not gratuitous.

Violence Sequences of sustained, intense and graphic violence may occur. But there is no sexual or domestic violence.

8 Glossary of words and phrases

This glossary or list of definitions gives the meaning of key words as they are used in the guidelines.

abusive	rude, disrespectful, harmful, showing contempt
bias	prejudice; a slanted and unjust attitude (usually towards minority or outsider groups)
classification	placing in categories or groups according to the frequency and intensity of classifiable elements (strong language, nudity, prejudice, sex, and violence)
close-up	an image in graphic detail, as if seen from very near
context	surroundings or background; the whole picture; the other parts of a film, video or game which come before and after a particular incident and clarify its meaning
discreet	restrained, modest, inoffensive; an image shown from a distance, without lingering on close-up detail
expletive	oath, swearword or curse
explicit	candid, leaving nothing to the imagination; focusing on close-up detail
exploitative	making use of someone or something for selfish or improper reasons
extreme	exceptionally intense, graphic or prolonged fantastical not realistic, not of this world (eg. fairy tales, science fiction)
frequent	often
frequency	how often something occurs
gory	bloody; detailed, graphic images of violence
graphic	vivid, showing all the details
gratuitous	lacking good reason; elements in a film, video or game which add nothing to the development of plot or character
implied	not shown or said directly but strongly suggested or hinted at
incite	arouse, stir up, inflame

<i>instructive</i>	instructing or showing how to do something
<i>intensity</i>	strength, power, force (in film, the intensity of a scene depends on how long it is, sound and lighting effects, language, context, and whether it is shot from a distance or close-up)
<i>legally restrictive</i>	limiting by law
<i>mainstream</i>	produced for the general public and available in ordinary cinemas and stores
<i>menacing</i>	threatening; suggesting harm and arousing fear
<i>mild</i>	moderate, slight, understated
<i>negative</i>	insulting, hostile
<i>nudity</i>	nakedness
<i>prejudice</i>	pre-judgement; bias; negative or hostile attitude (usually towards minority or outsider groups) based not on facts or individual experience but on group stereotypes
<i>positive</i>	outcome a result or conclusion that supports human rights values; an overall message in accord with the view that it is important to strive to be a decent human being
<i>profanity</i>	blasphemy; language showing lack of respect in regard to religious or sacred matters
<i>protagonist</i>	the main character in a film or game; the hero or heroine
<i>sexual activity</i>	kissing, caressing, embracing, love-making; physical intimacy between two people (in mainstream films, even in the "18" category, images of sexual activity are never as explicit as in adults-only "X18" material, eg. there is no focus on the genitals)
<i>stereotype</i>	a fixed idea which reduces individuals to a standard, usually prejudiced group mould.
<i>swearword</i>	expletive, oath, curse, foul language.
<i>theme</i>	subject matter; what a film is about

**These guidelines are available in all official languages.
Please contact the Film and Publication Board for more information.**

No. 199

25 February 2000

FILM AND PUBLICATION BOARD

FILMS AND PUBLICATIONS ACT, 1996

A classification committee has, under section 18(4)(a)(ii) of the *Films and Publications Act, 1996*, classified the undermentioned films X18 – RESTRICTED TO ADULTS ONLY.

The films contain scenes of explicit sexual conduct and may be distributed and/or exhibited only by a holder of a licence to conduct the business of adult premises registered with the Film and Publication Board.

REF NO	FILM	DISTRIBUTOR/EXHIBITOR
E/2000/0008	TANTRIC GUIDE TO SEXUAL POTENCY AND EXTENDED ORGASM, THE	G M PHARMACEUTICALS (PTY) LTD
E/2000/0009	TAOIST SEXUALITY (aka THE TAD OF SEX)	G M PHARMACEUTICALS (PTY) LTD

Printed by and obtainable from the Government Printer, Bosman Street, Private Bag X85, Pretoria, 0001

Publications: Tel: (012) 334-4507, 334-4508, 334-4509, 334-4510

Advertisements: Tel: (012) 334-4673, 334-4674, 334-4504

Subscriptions: Tel: (012) 334-4735, 334-4736, 334-4737

Cape Town Branch: Tel: (021) 465-7531

Gedruk deur en verkrygbaar by die Staatsdrukker, Bosmanstraat, Privaatsak X85, Pretoria, 0001

Publikasies: Tel: (012) 334-4507, 334-4508, 334-4509, 334-4510

Advertensies: Tel: (012) 334-4673, 334-4674, 334-4504

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