

# **Discriminatory Language Research**

**Presented to the BBFC on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2010**



Slesenger Research

# Research objectives

- To understand the role of context and how it changes attitudes to discriminatory language / issues
- To establish the degree to which the public expect to be warned about potentially offensive language/behaviour/stereotyping in CA, ECI/ECA
- To understand spontaneous reactions to a number of discriminatory terms
- To explore what mitigates the impact of these words and how
- To understand the public's response to the Video Recordings Act and their appreciation of the 'E' classification

# Recruitment Criteria

## Group Discussions

- 2 hours
- 7/8 respondents
- All had personally watched a film either at the cinema or at home (DVD rental/purchase) at least once in the last two to three months
- Spread of occasional and more regular film viewers
- Even spread of parents of different ages of children and boys/girls
- All respondents were pre - placed with three relevant film/TV works
- All respondents completed a short questionnaire/diary about the material they had viewed

## Paired Depths

- 1-1 1/2 hours
- As for group discussions

# Sample and Methodology

## 9 x Group discussions

18-25	Single, working/students, BC1	<b>Race</b>	Female	Edgware
18-25	Single, working/students, C2D	<b>Sexuality</b>	Male	Leeds
25-40	Children under 8 years Working, part-time and non, C2D	<b>Sexuality</b>	Female	Leeds
25-40	Children under 8 years Working, BC1	<b>Sexuality</b>	Male	Scotland
25-40	Children 8-12 years Working, part-time and non, BC1	<b>Race</b>	Female	Birmingham
25-40	Children 8-12 years Working, C2D	<b>Disability</b>	Male	Pinner
45-60	Children 12-18 years Working, part-time and non, BC1	<b>Disability</b>	Female	Scotland
45-60	Children 12-18 years Working, C2D	<b>Race</b>	Male	Edgware
55+	Empty nesters/no children BC1	<b>Disability</b>	Mixed	Birmingham

# Sample and Methodology

5 x Paired depths

1 x Individual interview

## **Ethnic minority**

Younger	Asian	Female	Birmingham
Older	Black	Male	Pinner

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## **Family member of Disabled person**

Younger	Physically disabled individual interview	Female	Pinner
Older	Mental disability pair	Female	Pinner

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## **Sexuality**

Younger	Gay couple/individuals	Male	Leeds
Older	Gay couple/individuals	Female	Scotland

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# Headlines



- The BBFC is mostly in line with public opinion regarding discriminatory language
  - If anything respondents were more relaxed...
- The BBFC is right to look at this issue and include it in the Guidelines
- Racism is more of a concern than disability and sexuality
- Take care with CA....don't be discriminatory or overly alarmist
- Those from specific minority groups recognise that they are a more sensitive audience but argue that the BBFC should classify films with the broader public in mind

# Who did we interview?



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# The Respondents

Not a homogenous group, however more similarities than differences noted across the sample



# Age and Lifestage

## Some trends observed:

- Younger people were more in tune with BBFC's analysis and responses
- Older people (especially men) seem more comfortable overall with discriminatory terms
- Having children aged 8-12 years forces many to consider the impact of language

*I challenge my older kids – why are you using it and do you know what this means?!*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Having kids does change your attitudes. I used 'mong' and 'spastic' all the time, but they are nasty and cruel so I don't now. Kids throw these words around but they don't understand*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# Different generations

We didn't mean them in a derogatory way and the kids tell their grandparents off if they use them  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

We were brought up with 'going to the Paki shop' and 'getting a Chinky for tea', they were the words of our generation  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

The older generation will say things like 'I am going down the Paki shop'. It is not an offensive word to them, it is just like slang  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

The older generation are more racist. Younger people are more accepting of people, people in wheelchairs or whatever  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

My 80 year old mother said 'she was looking for a nice nigger brown carpet'!  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

I have got some black friends and they are nice guys but generally I hate them. If I am a racist I am a racist. I see what's coming into this country and taking all the benefits and sucking us dry and our country's in a right mess because of the immigration. And they are nearly all black so that's the reason  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# Gender

- **Men**

- seem to be more accepting of discriminatory language than women

- **Women**

- are often the gatekeepers for bad language in the home and claim to hate hearing their children use words like 'retard' and 'spastic'
- more concerned about film classification in general, particularly around PG and 12A

*I have used retard – 'he's such a retard man' but not anymore, unacceptable and my wife has told me so*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*Most words are used in a jocular way. I'm guilty of using 'poof,' 'gay', 'faggot,' but in a friendly manner*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*You hear people in the pub and you are more accepting, but it's less okay on TV*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# Region

Observations not hard data...

## South/London Leeds

- Greater exposure and understanding of discriminatory words and issues

## Birmingham

- Particularly sensitive to racist language (esp. 'Paki')

## Scotland

- Later adopters of 'political correctness'
- 'Mong' is a well used term amongst young people

# The depth interviews

In tune with the broader sample, but acknowledged a more personal perspective

- Interestingly all respondents were able to separate their own feelings from broader classification issues
- Furthermore, many had a very pragmatic attitude to film classification:
  - especially those who have come to terms with their differences
- The key learning is that sub-groups want to feel normalised and part of society:
  - this has an impact on Consumer Advice in particular
- Language per se is not always the issue; language within bullying behaviour or violence is more problematic
- People from one group were often more sensitive to the needs of others eg. black men worrying about the word 'Paki'
- Comedy often but not always mitigates; can be left feeling discriminated against and uncomfortable – this is especially true of stand up comedy

# The depth interviews

Whilst those from specific groups understand that the BBFC must classify films according to the widest audience, it is worth noting the impact of specific words

## Gay men

- “Arse bandit, turd burglar, shit stabber”:
  - makes them feel dirty and dehumanised
- “Nonce”
  - association between being gay and a paedophile
- “Sissy and pansy”
  - emasculating and reminiscent of childhood bullying
- “Gay” – accept teenagers’ usage as being non discriminatory but dislike link between gay and something negative

*It's talking about the sexual act. That is what these are, and these other ones. It's very different to the term for what you call a homosexual. My first reaction is that it is none of your fucking business. I don't go and call people 'fanny pokers'. You wouldn't turn around and do the straight equivalent because there is none. These are about the act but they make it sound sordid*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*I think that 'shit stabber' is just vulgar. And 'brown dick'. They are more offensive to me than 'uphill gardener' or 'shirt lifter'. Because they are talking about faeces and there is an association with being gay*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*To me, 'pansy' and 'sissy' are both the same. They are comments not on our sexuality, but our weakness, our gender, our ability to be a man*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

# The depth interviews

## Gay women

- Disliked seeing men discussing lesbians (Teachers)
- Sensitive about imitable behaviour
- Disliked Lesbo/Lezzer

*I can't bear anything racial or prejudice and I really dislike 'dyke' and obviously 'lesbo'*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

*'A lezzer' is an awful term, one I really dislike and find offensive*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

*It is a stigma, we are just human beings, it's singling us out and there's also aggression behind it, the way it's said to you*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

# The depth interviews

**Asian women  
Black men**

- Accept peer to peer use of nigger and Paki, especially if comedic and protagonists are the same generation
- Asian women felt the word 'Paki' has become a generic term for non-white, non-black
  - felt the word is more prevalent and widely used than 'nigger'

*'Paki' is more commonplace. You could be walking down the street and if someone doesn't know your race, you are just classed as a 'Paki'*  
**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

*In real life it can happen where black people call one another nigger, but I just don't like the word and I wouldn't choose to say it*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

*It annoys me that the word 'Paki' is used for anyone who looks Asian no matter where they are from – Bangladesh, India or whatever. If somebody is from Pakistan, we would say Pakistani not Paki*  
**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

# The depth interviews

## Mothers of physically/mentally disabled

- Concerns and anxieties revolve around bullying and imitability
  - like other mothers, keen to stamp out the growth of words like 'retard' and 'spastic'
  - dislike the word 'spazz' as much as 'spastic' (unlike broader sample)
- Accept that these words are only a small part of the challenges their child will have to face

*There is a line where you can tolerate things even though they are wrong , and that is okay, it doesn't cross the line. It's self directed – (Gilmore Girls clip)*  
**(Mother of mentally disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*The word 'spastic' or 'spazz' should never be used. Using the word is mocking everyone who is disabled*

**(Mother of mentally disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*I correct people when they say handicapped or spastic. I hate it, it turns my stomach. It is mostly the older generation. I prefer disability*

**(Mother of mentally disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

# The BBFC and Discriminatory Language in Film



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# Attitudes to Discriminatory Language in Film

Widespread interest in the BBFC looking at this issue

- Recognised as being of concern:
  - can be as offensive as 'bad' language; for many, the word 'nigger' is on a par with the strongest swear words
  - has an impact on society as a whole; can both reflect and shape attitudes
  - parents worry about imitable behaviour
- Widespread appreciation of the fact that the BBFC has incorporated discriminatory language into the Guidelines

*Yes they are right to look at these things. This type of language is frowned upon now*

**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*Yes, definitely. It's a big subject. We live in a multi-racial society and it's relevant for them to look at it*

**Male, 45-60, children 12-18, C2D**

# The BBFC

## In line (mostly) with public opinion

- If anything, respondents were more 'relaxed' than the BBFC:
  - accept the realities of how people interact with each other; often calling each other 'discriminatory' terms
  - often miss the odd word within the context of a film
  - accept and understand mitigating factors
  - quick to dismiss one off uses of discriminatory words
  - lots of discussion about things getting 'too PC' (especially amongst older respondents)

# The Three Categories

## Race

Resonates most strongly with people  
Greater consensus of opinion across the groups

## Disability

A key area of concern  
Feel that society is aware of disability issues and also at an individual level, many do worry about offending disabled people

## Sexuality

Some discussion about whether sexuality in film is a discriminatory issue, unless the work in question is strongly homophobic

# The Three Categories

## Race resonates most strongly with people

- More likely to be noticed in film:
  - often because it is accompanied by violence or is the theme of a film
  - the belief that everyone is affected by racism
  - in the public arena; challenged and discussed
- Taps into deeper concerns and beliefs:
  - people appreciate they cannot be outwardly racist
  - however recognition that racism is alive and well within British society:
    - post 9/11 fears
    - concerns about immigration
    - rise of far right

*I think that racism is more worrying.  
There is a lot more of it about*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*As a people I really thought that we  
have moved forward on our views  
about racism. But what with the war  
in Afghanistan and the terrorist  
attacks, we seem to be going  
backwards and there is a lot of racial  
tension around*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1,  
Birmingham)**

# Racism

*We are the understanding generation but there is a concern that it's going back the other way. There are tensions in the world, the wars and immigration issues. I think that it is one step forward and two steps back at the moment*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It's a big divide in the country the National Front are getting lots of support whether we like it or not*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*I think that 9/11 has brought a lot of racism back for whatever reason. I think that things have got worse since then*

**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

# Racism

*Nigger and other racist words are really offensive and I don't like them*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Only 'nigger', other than that anything goes. We are desensitised by things on TV these days*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

*Racist content often comes with violence and verbal abuse*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*'Paki bastard' is very strong and offensive*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*Annoyed if they use retard, horrified if they used nigger*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Racial discrimination has been massive for decades*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*Widely accepted that you don't use the word 'nigger'*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*It's around all the time. There are more minority people than disabled. And we know more people from different countries than we know disabled*  
**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

# The Three Categories

## **Disability** : Bullying disabled people is the main area of concern

- Genuine compassion for physically and mentally disabled people (especially amongst younger people)
- Respect for disabled people and their struggles can be undermined by language:
  - esp. 'retard', 'spastic' and 'mong'
  - mothers were particularly keen to stamp out this kind of language amongst their children

*I just don't think it's nice to poke fun at someone who might not be able to defend themselves. No-one likes to be laughed at or singled out for a reason that they have no control over. So to call someone a 'retard', it's not so much that they are making fun of that particular person, it's more offensive to disabled people in general who are not retarded. It's like calling them 'spazz'*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*I think that disabled are more discriminated against in the fact that you see so much now in the paper where people have committed suicide because people in the street are victimising them purely because they are disabled. There's so much of it these days. You hear such horrible comments about people because they are disabled; they are threatened because they are disabled. What's become of us?*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# To what extent does the public agree with the BBFC's decisions?



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# Agreement with BBFC's decisions

**Mostly....spot on \***



- Works that prompted the most discussion and debate:
  - Ashes to Ashes
  - The Believer
  - Cast Offs

**\* Please see Appendix for a full analysis of all the clips / films**

# The BBFC's Decisions

## Disability clips

	Level of agreement	
Mermaid Game	✓✓✓	
Cloudy with a Chance	✓✓✓	
Colour Me Perfect	✓✓✓	
Speed Racer	✓✓✓	
Friends	✓	↓
Gilmore Girls	✓✓✓	
Rock Rivals	✓✓✓	
Hancock	✓✓✓	
Extras	✓✓	(↓)
Making of Kung Fu Flid	✓	(↓)

# The BBFC's Decisions

## Sexuality clips

	Level of agreement	
The Two Ronnies	✓✓✓	
Mean Girls	✓✓✓	
Are You Being Served	✓✓✓	
Love on the Side	✓✓✓	
Modern Family	✓✓✓	
Glee	✓✓✓	
Midsomer Murders	✓✓✓	
Hancock	✓✓✓	
We are Mongrels	✓✓✓	
Little Britain	✓✓✓	
Ashes to Ashes	✓	(↑)
Teachers	✓	(↓)

# The BBFC's Decisions

## Sexuality films

	Level of agreement
Glee	✓✓✓
I love you Phillip Morris	✓✓✓
I now pronounce you Chuck & Larry	✓✓✓*
The Inbetweeners	✓✓✓

\*DVD's were '15'

# The BBFC's Decisions

## Racism clips

	Level of agreement
The Dam Busters	✓✓✓
Jag	✓✓✓
Into the Arms of Strangers	✓✓✓
Outnumbered	✓ (↓)
Mork & Mindy	✓✓✓
Mo'Nique	✓✓✓
Borat	✓✓✓
Love and Hate	✓✓✓
Shifty	✓✓✓
Roy Chubby Brown	✓✓✓
This is England	✓✓✓

# The BBFC's Decisions

## Disability films

		Level of agreement	
Special people	12	✓✓✓	
Ben X	15	✓✓	(↓)
Inside I'm Dancing	15	✓✓	(↓)
Cast Offs	15	✓×	(↑)(↓)
The Inbetweeners	18	✓✓✓	(But not for disability issues)

# The BBFC's Decisions

## Race films

Gran Torino

Love and Hate

The Believer

### Level of agreement

✓✓✓

✓✓✓

✓ (↑)

**What about discriminatory  
language itself?  
Which words have the potential  
to cause the most offense?**



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# Reactions to 'discriminatory' words

No one word exists in isolation

Two variables shaped the discussions:



# Changes in meaning over time

The meaning of certain words have evolved and changed over time

- “Gay” as defined in the urban dictionary:

*“The dictionary definition is happy. However, this is archaic and few people use it any more except in the phrase ‘gay old time’*

*Homosexual, especially homosexual males but can be used for lesbians as well*

*A generic insult. It can mean bad, stupid or whatever you want it to mean”*

*Gay doesn't mean gay – you're gay sir – it just means rubbish.*

*If you don't like it, it's gay*

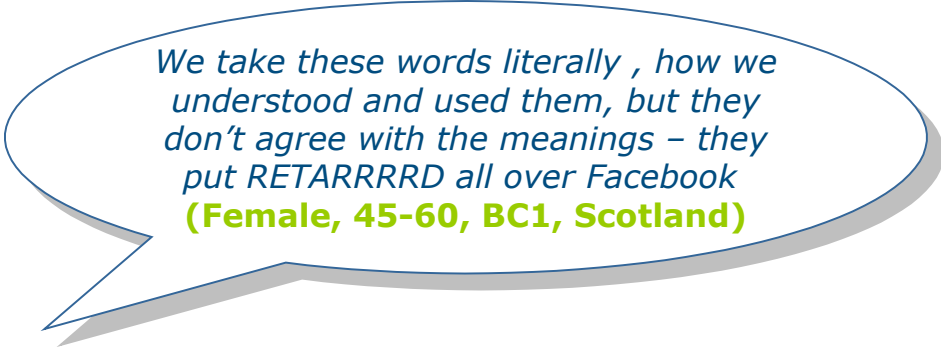
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*'Gay' is the big one at the moment. Everything is so 'gay'. If they don't like something, it's 'gay'.*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

# Changes in meaning over time

- “Retard” is commonly used as a peer to peer insult (often in a bantering, comedic way) by teenagers:



*We take these words literally , how we understood and used them, but they don't agree with the meanings – they put RETARRRRD all over Facebook*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# Changes in meaning over time

- “Nigger” can be re - claimed by young black people, (especially in music)

*They can use it themselves and call it to each other. My lad has heard it in rapping music but I had to tell him that while it's ok for them to say it, you can't say it. It's offensive*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*You do hear 'nigger' now in songs and lots of black people calling themselves and friends nigger*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Some black people will refer to themselves as 'nigger'. I think it's a race thing, and about belonging to the group, but if a white person or someone outside the group use it, it's offensive*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*Nigger has now come back in a jokey term. Black people saying 'nigger'. Also in rap songs*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*I work beside a black guy who uses the expression 'nigger' a lot. Not with any malice and it's not a big deal to him*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

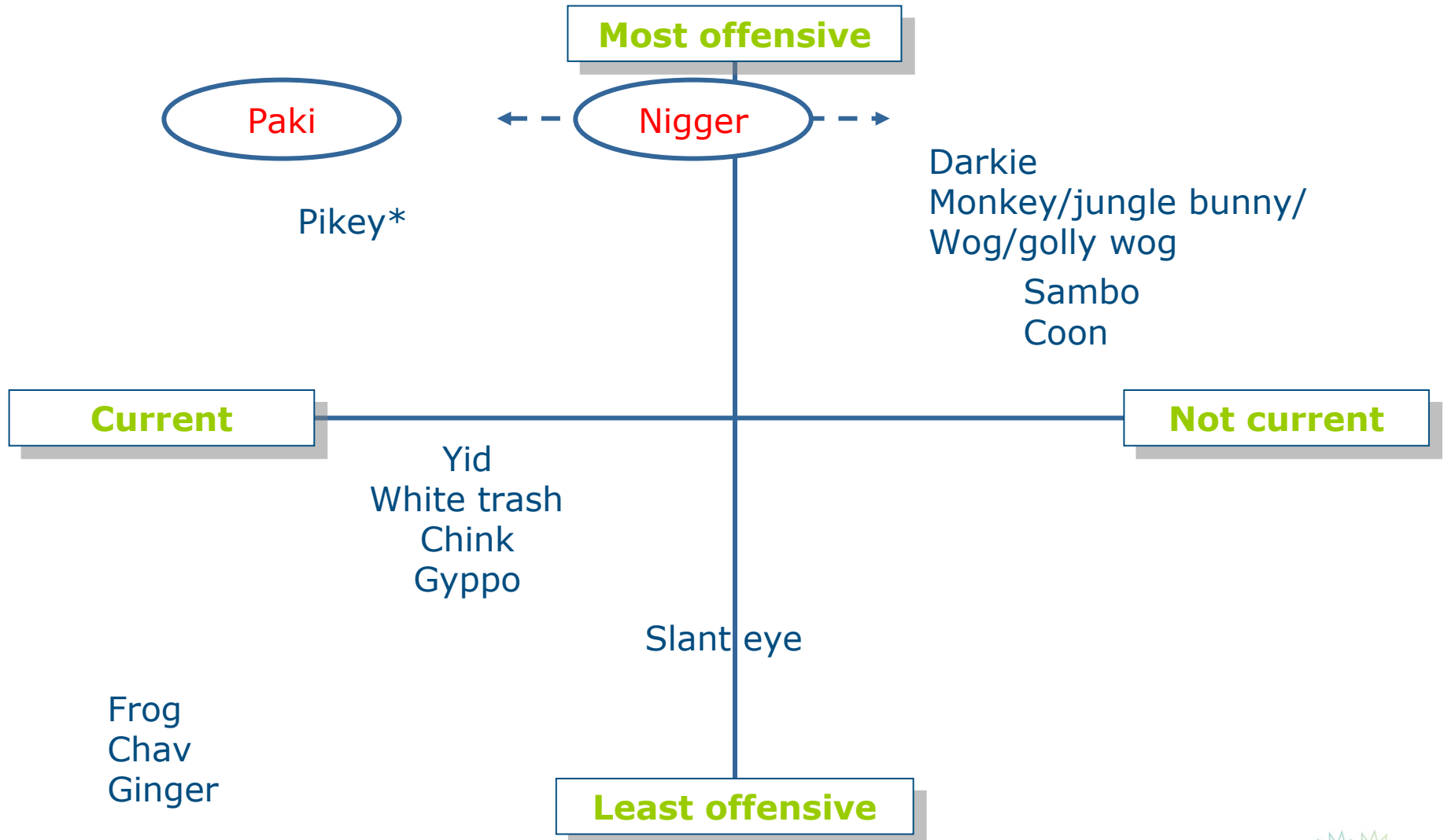
# Reactions to 'discriminatory' words



Racist language has the potential to cause the most offence overall

There was a great deal of consistency across all the groups and depths when ranking the words

# Racist Language



\*If known and understood

# “Nigger”

Has the potential to cause great offence:

- Provokes an almost visceral response
- Has a historical context of racist abuse, slavery and white supremacy
- Mitigating factors are few and far between; peer to peer only

*White supremacy and stuff like that. The entire history of the subjugation of the black people. It obviously has real sensitivity*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*It is a bit of a taboo. You get hauled over the coals if you say it*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It's because the black person was persecuted by the white man, that is where the word comes from. That is why there is so much tension around the word, it is because of the slaves*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

# “Paki”

Disliked and linked with violence and bullying for most

- As offensive as ‘nigger’ but less of a taboo:
  - As a result, felt to be more widespread usage
- Older, Birmingham respondents argue that it refers to people from Pakistan and therefore is acceptable
- Most respondents recognise that it is often a derogatory term
- Furthermore Asian respondents dislike the way it is used to denote anyone who is not ‘black, yellow or white’

*I think that ‘Paki’ is worse because it is used more*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*They are proud to be called Paki. It’s like saying Brummie isn’t it?*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*The way the word has been used has connotations of violence. Racially motivated violence still happens a lot*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*I see nothing wrong with the word ‘Paki’ because to me that’s like calling me a Brit*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# "Coon", "monkey", "wog", "sambo", "jungle bunny", "darkie"

Not current vernacular but could have potential to offend

*'Darkie', I call my friend that*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25,  
C2, Pinner)**

*'Monkey' awful and always racist in  
this context. Same for 'Jungle Bunny'*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*'Coon', very offensive, similar to  
Paki and Nigger. You can't use it  
without being racist, though you  
don't hear much of it these days*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# "Pikey"

Not well known across the sample but those who knew the term, recognised its potential to offend

*It's a really derogatory name for a gypsy. If you were talking to a gypsy and called them a pikey they would stab you*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

'Gyppo' was thought to be inherently less offensive but still not a nice term

*Gyppo, abbreviation for Gypsy, it's meant to be offensive*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# “Yid”, “White trash”, “Chink”, “Slant Eye”

Not the nicest of terms but not automatically discriminatory or offensive

*Chink. It's not offensive, not really. It's like calling someone from Birmingham a Brummie*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*They call themselves 'Yids'. I have a lot of Jewish friends who call themselves the Yid Army*

**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*They are less violent; they don't have violence associated with them*

**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

# “Chav”, “Ginger”, “Frog”

Not perceived to be inherently discriminatory; chav is perceived more about fashion than anything else

*It's not based on race. It's just based on a person and the way that they dress. It's about your appearance not who you are*

**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

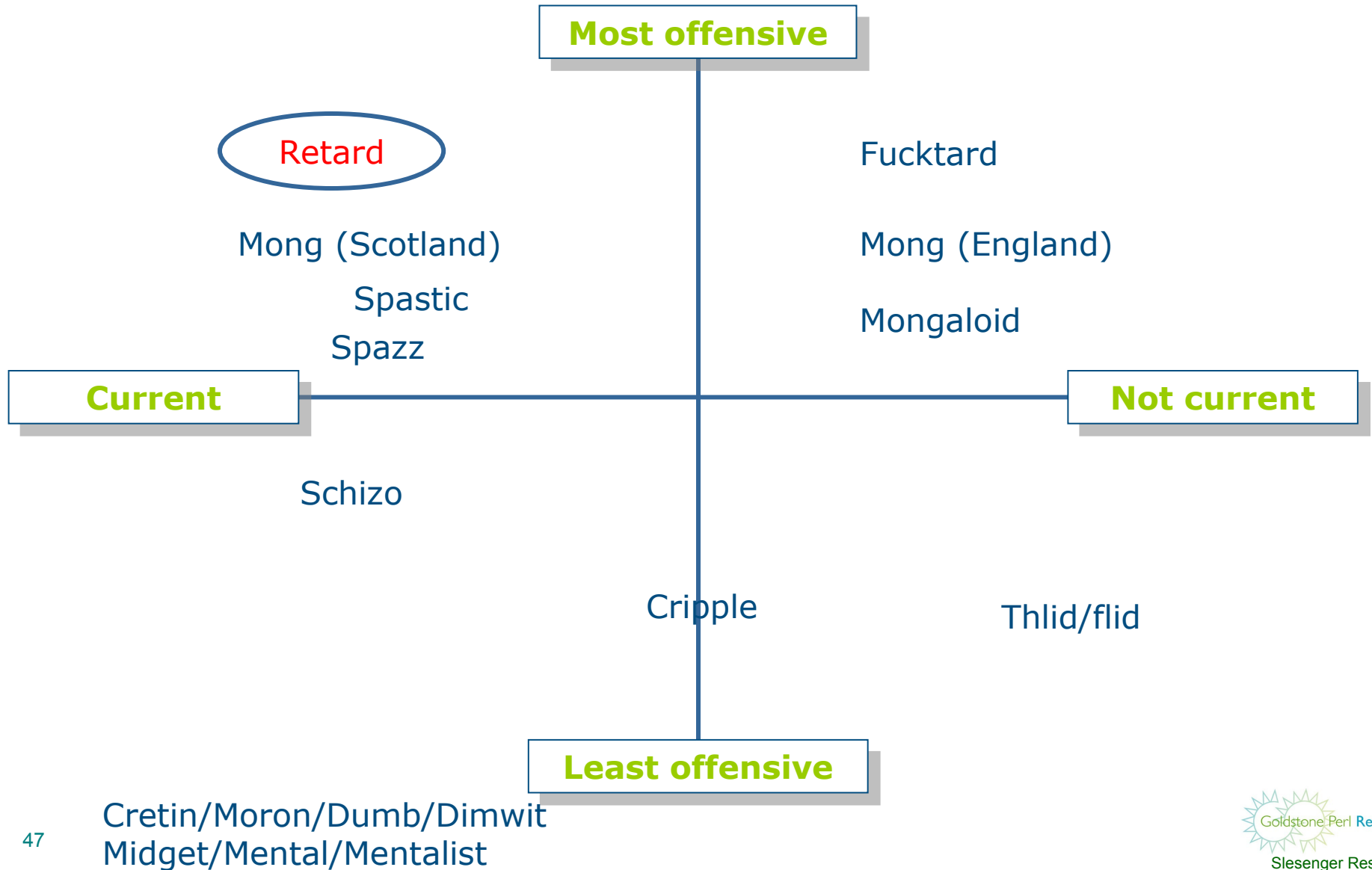
*They choose to look like that. Chav is just a collective term for different styles*

**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*I think that upping the classification for the saying Chav is like a world gone mad. If you looked at that you would need to look at everything like mods or rockers, Sloane Rangers in the 80's*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

# Disability Language



# "Retard"

Creeping back into young people's vernacular as a peer to peer insult, but disliked by many (especially mothers)

*Where I work there's all sorts of age groups and the younger age group use that word 'spazz' I have noticed. I work on Reception and people go by and shout to one another and they also use that 'retard'. And I think they are terrible words*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*The word 'spastic' is a terrible word and I really dislike it and retard's the same, find it hugely offensive*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*My kids used that all the time. To them it's no more than saying idiot. That's what they actually mean. They are taking the mick out of each other*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# "Spazz" "Spastic"

Spazz felt to be more current and less offensive than spastic, however a growing usage amongst young people is noted by mothers

*'Spazz' and 'spastic' are two completely different words. 'Spazz' is just a throwaway word*  
**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

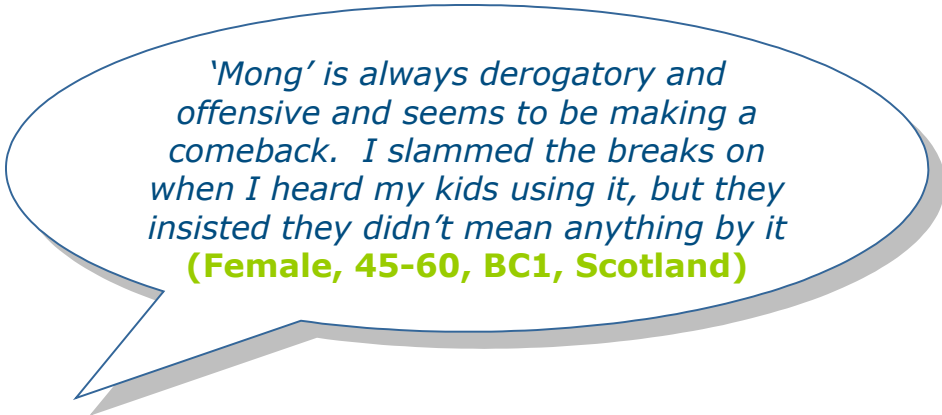
*I think 'spazz' is the weaker version of 'retard'. And it's a bit more jovial, I would say that 'I am such a spazz'*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*I think 'spazz' is different to 'spastic', not as strong and not directly linked to disability*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*You don't hear kids saying 'spastic', it's more from our generation. I used to call my friends that all the time*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

# “Mong”

A very offensive and widely used term in Scotland, however felt to be almost obsolete in other parts of the country



*'Mong' is always derogatory and offensive and seems to be making a comeback. I slammed the breaks on when I heard my kids using it, but they insisted they didn't mean anything by it*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# “Fucktard”

Not known, but instantly disliked due to link with the word 'fuck'

# Sexuality Language



# "Dyke"

Provokes a polarised response but those with lesbian friends or who are lesbians recognise its potential to offend

*That is an offensive word to women*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*With 'gay' and 'lesbian', they call themselves that, but 'dyke' is so offensive*  
**(Mother of mentally disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*I really don't like the word 'dyke' and the tone behind it and the way people say it*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

# “Faggot” “Fag”

Likewise, faggot and fag (to a lesser extent) were felt to be more discriminatory than the word ‘gay’

*Gay people would definitely not call themselves ‘faggot’*  
**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

*I don’t like fag and faggot. They are worse than gay*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*With ‘lezzers’, I know some lesbians who refer to themselves as ‘lezzers’. I don’t know many gay men who would run around saying ‘I am such a faggot!’*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*Because it’s designed to be offensive, in my mind. Saying ‘gay’ is not being offensive, but ‘fag’ is slightly derogatory*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

# “Poof” “Batty boy”

Seem to have inherent comedic value and respondents struggled to take these words seriously

*'Poof' doesn't mean gay. I would use it to slag off his golf shot or the jumper he was wearing.*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*'Batty Boy' is just funny. Embarrassing to use. Just silly*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*'You poof' – I'm not saying you're gay and it's nothing like saying 'you nigger'*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# “Pansy” “Sissy” “Shirt lifter”

Light hearted tone noted by respondents but gay men interviewed disliked these terms

*They don't sound too aggressive and it's not directed towards the sexuality*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*They are more subtle... I call my brother half these words*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

## “Slut”

Disliked by most women in particular but not felt to be discriminatory

# "Gay"

Not negatively framed: a factual description or means something entirely different (to young people)

*If you call a gay person 'gay' they would not be offended but if you say to a black person, 'hey nigger' he would be offended*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*I would never correct people who said 'gay' and ask them to say 'homosexual'. 'Gay' is what you would use*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*'Gay' – kids say it all the time*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*I don't think they are being discriminatory. Because I work in a primary school, I think some of them don't even know the full meaning of the word that they are using. But they are getting that word from programs that they watch on TV or things that they have heard, or things that they see. It's OK to say that things are 'gay'*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*It's a neutral word. It's not offensive and can mean one of two things*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

# Sexuality: Cruder References

## Most offensive

**Turd burglar**  
**Arse bandit**  
**Shit stabber**  
**Brown dick**

Visual and graphic association with faeces; derogatory  
Parents worry about imitable behaviour

**Rug/carpet muncher**  
**Clam shucker**  
**Fish/tuna breath**

Fairly descriptive; parents worry about having to explain away  
Disliked but not widely used  
Less aggressive than 'male' terms

**Fudge packer**  
**Uphill gardener**  
**Chutney ferret**

Teenage nonsense  
Easy to miss and dismiss  
Comedic tone

## Least offensive

# “Arse bandit” “Shit stabber” “Turd burglar”

*Arse bandit, shit stabber, fudge packer.... It is about what they do rather than what person they are*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*‘Arse Bandit’, ‘Shit Stabber’ and ‘Bent Bastard’ are threatening and definitely high up*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*Kids understand gay but they don’t actually know what two men do. With these words you would have to explain what they are doing*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

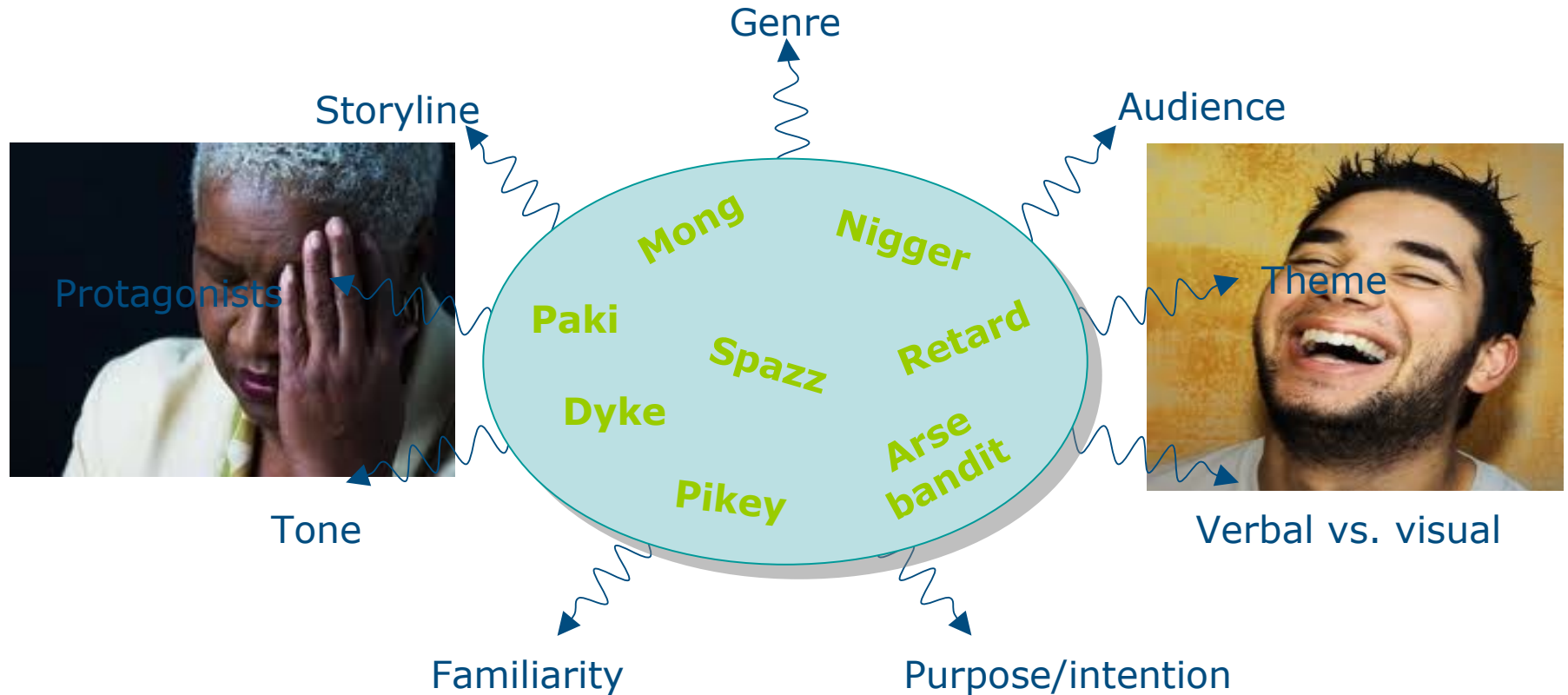
*It’s about sexuality... you can visualise it and it’s too much information*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

# Context, context, context: Key mitigating factors



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# Mitigating the impact of the words



**Even the impact of worst words (Nigger and Paki) can be significantly reduced by certain 'mitigators'**

# Genre: Comedy

Has the greatest potential to challenge and change the impact of a word

- Changes the intention from offence to entertain
- Can force people to explore their own prejudices
- Audience can miss or dismiss the word itself in the joke
- Particularly powerful for self directed or peer to peer comments
- However, people do not always get the joke! If this happens, one is left feeling the impact of the word:
  - irony is not always appreciated, especially if the respondent is not familiar with the works (Borat and Ashes to Ashes are good examples of this)

# Genre: Comedy

*You take it all with a pinch of salt because it is comedy*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*The comedy element of Little Britain takes away any offence*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*It's just fun. Comedians take the piss out of things. That's what they do*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*Something Like Ali G, that's fine as it can be made to be funny*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

*In comedy it is okay and it isn't meant to be offensive*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*It's much more offensive when it's serious drama. When you have comedy, it's easier to laugh off*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*Her context is comedy and you expect to hear that kind of language (Mo'Nique)*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

# Genre: Stand up Comedy

Viewers of stand up comedy have the most forgiving mindset overall:

- Stand up comedians are known to push boundaries
- Viewing is often uncomfortable
  - Traditionally sexist and racist humour
- However respondents feel that the audience has a choice to be there or not
- Often specific comedians (Roy Chubby Brown, Jimmy Carr) are not felt to be specifically racists as they insult so many different groups

*I think that comedy should exist outside morality and ethics. Like some things are funny, even if they are in bad taste. Take for instance the Jonathan Ross, Russell Brand thing. It was funny because it was comedy*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*The whole point of comedy is that you get to say things that are indefensible....I am not a politician, I don't have a manifesto. I don't have to defend it.*

**(Frankie Boyle interviewed in The Sunday Times 14/11/10)**

# Genre: 'Real'

At the other end of the spectrum, where the works feel very real and reflective of today's society, concerns about discriminatory language are at their highest

- Difficult for respondents to distance themselves from the events shown as believe it 'could happen'
- This is particularly true of contemporary British films such as Love and Hate and This is England
- Whereas the racism of Gran Torino and Mork & Mindy was easier to dismiss (American plus other mitigating factors)

*It's quite recent (Love and Hate) and it's close to the way in which we really do live*

**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*It was the conversation between the two men (Teachers). What is it between lesbian women and straight men, they have this 'come and have a night with me attitude'. It's the sort of real conversation you'd hear next door*

**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

# Genre: Historical

Historical works enable people to rationalise discriminatory behaviour and language

- Language is deemed to be naturalistic and 'real' and therefore inherently less offensive
- The educational benefit of seeing how things have changed is also potentially relevant and respondents are keen for the works to reach as wide an audience as possible

*It doesn't make it acceptable but that's how it was then (Ashes to Ashes)*

**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

*It's a representation of the times and that's how it was then. You'd expect that from Hunt (Ashes to Ashes)*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*It makes a difference when it is a real person and not a drama. They are trying to explain what it was like to go through that and I would classify that quite low (Into the Arms of Strangers)*

**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# Genre: Old Works

## The racism of old works can be shocking, even in comedy

- Whilst the issue prompted a great deal of discussion, respondents felt that the classification of old works needs to be assessed within the context of the era in question and the intent to actually offend the audience is also important
  - Love Thy Neighbour was often discussed in the groups
- Interestingly modern works set in the past are not always understood in the same way:
  - Ashes to Ashes can polarise respondents
- Consumer Advice has a role to play and 'contains discriminatory references / terms' was thought to be particularly useful in this respect

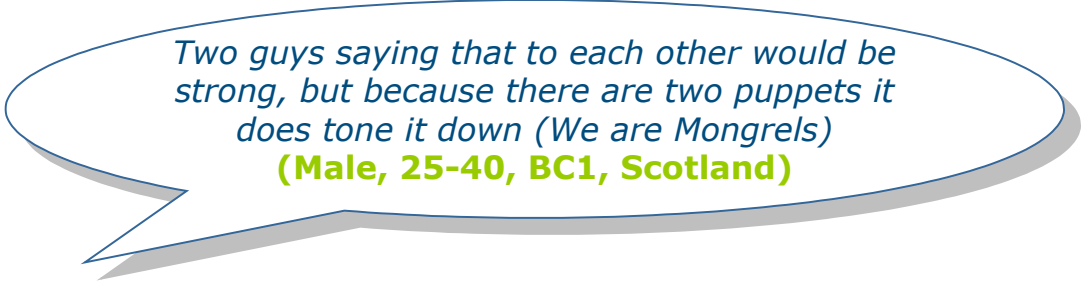
*I would leave things as they are and just be proud that we have moved on from it*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It is just wrong, but it is olden days, old fashioned, and no one would do that now (Dam Busters)*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

# Genre: Puppetry

The clip 'We are Mongrels' provoked a lively debate about the impact of puppetry

- Puppetry does mitigate but to varying degrees
- For many, the scene felt very real and the bullying tone and word 'nonce' was offensive – especially to the gay men interviewed



*Two guys saying that to each other would be strong, but because there are two puppets it does tone it down (We are Mongrels)*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# Purpose and Intention

## Of the word(s) used...

- At worst:
  - protagonist deliberately sets out to offend:
    - could have chosen a less offensive word eg. Gay not Fag, Asian not Paki
    - direct, bullying and discriminatory tone
- At best:
  - factual and objective
  - describing another's actions (Jag)
  - descriptive (Into Arms of Strangers, Kung Fu Flid)

## Of the works... (clip)

- Educational (Glee)
- Showing balance (Love and Hate)
- To be humorous or ironic (Little Britain)
- To entertain without an agenda (I love you Phillip Morris?)
- Or to make a comment about an important issue
  - Ben X, Cast Offs, Special People

# Purpose and Intention

*I would want my son to watch that film (Gran Torino) so I wouldn't want too strong a rating or too strong a message on the back to stop other parents letting their children watch it*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It is not there to cause offense (Dambuster) so it's not offensive*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*Yes there was the odd reference (I now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry) but overall the film was trying to get people to understand*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*The intention (Borat clip) is to get you to take a look at the sort of people who really do believe that and to see how ridiculous it is*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

# Purpose and Intention: Works

*Ben X would be a good and important film for younger teenagers to watch as there is a good and important message*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Gran Torino was an outstanding film and with good meaning. It should be made available for more people to see, so I would lower the classification*

**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*The moral of the story (Gran Torino) outshines the violence and the language was necessary for the story*

**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*If it is educational like with Into the Arms of Strangers then that could affect the rating and be lower*

**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

*It is the intent of how it's used. It wasn't malicious and it is clear that it is wrong to use it (Jag)*

**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

*The sort of conversation you may have down the pub, no malice intended (Teachers)*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# Direction

Who was making the comment, to whom and how made a difference

- At worst:
  - directed at another person (who then showed the impact the word had on them)
  - a discriminatory term to a person from that specific group eg 'retard' to a disabled person
  - accompanied by swearing or violence
  - repeated use of the word to the same person and within the same scene
- At best:
  - an aside and to no one in particular
  - to self and of self
  - reporting another's behaviour

# Direct

*It would have been a lot more offensive  
(Hancock) if it had been direct to a person*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*My kids are older but if they call each  
other a spazz they don't mean to be  
offensive. But if one of them was in a  
wheelchair or a friend was in a wheelchair  
then they would mean it as offensive*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It's terrible when it's a direct insult  
to someone disabled*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It would have to be specifically  
derogatory and directed at somebody*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*That is directed so it is worse. They purposefully aimed  
the word at her. It is a lot stronger than say 'stupid bitch'  
because she has learning difficulties. It is a triple  
whammy*  
**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

# Theme vs. One Off

## Theme

- On-going and constant
- Less about language and more about the concept (often of racism, disability)
- Resolution and treatment of the issues and overall tone becomes key



- Need for specific CA

VS.

## 'One off' mention

- Easier to miss and dismiss
- Especially regarding sexuality and disability
- Less true of strong race words?



- No need for specific CA

# Theme vs. One Off

## Theme

*The repetition makes it more real because it was said a lot (Ashes to Ashes clip). It's the whole theme of the episode*

**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*It's different when it's there a lot, when it's something that you take away with you afterwards and when you think about the film, you remember it*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*If it's the theme, not a one off comment*

**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*I think that you draw a different line when it becomes a significant element of the film*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

## 'One off' mention

*That just went over my head, didn't take any notice of it (Hairspray)*

**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

*Bringing attention to it wouldn't be a great idea. You hardly hear it (Charlie and the Chocolate Factory)*

**(Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*I've seen that many, many times and never noticed anything (Charlie and the Chocolate Factory)*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

VS.

# The Protagonists

## Most acceptable

- Peer to peer, reclaiming discriminatory terms (Mo'Nique, Shifty, Special People, Inside I'm Dancing)
- Teenagers reframing meaning eg. 'gay' (and 'retard') (The Inbetweeners, Mean Girls' trailer)
- A group to an individual (Ashes to Ashes)
- Man to woman
- Child to adult (or other children); worry about imitability, impact on society, resurgence of 'old' words like 'retard' and 'spastic'
- One race or religion to another, non-disabled to disabled

## Least acceptable

# The Protagonists

*The fact that it's a child (This is England) who has no respect for the man makes it worse. It shows that he has been brought up in an environment with people like that*  
**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

*Because he is gay anyway (Matt Lucas in Little Britain), he is saying it about himself*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*Because he is disabled and he's talking about it and it's less offensive. He's accepted it, so him saying it is okay (The Making of Kung Flu Flid)*  
**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

*Horrible, disgusting, appalling, especially with the child. That makes it more shocking (This is England)*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*I think that men come across more aggressively than women. It is just how they are, how they talk*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*It's the same as Mo'Nique, he is Asian so you don't take offence (Shifty)*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

*The gang makes it worse. It is like what comedy does but the other way round. And the racism being instilled into the kid just makes it so much worse (This is England)*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

# Tone

As per previous research, tone can have an impact on discriminatory language and theme

- The Believer's relentless threat of violence and overall tension heightens the overall racist theme
- The way in which film 'leaves' respondents is also significant:
  - Gran Torino, Love and Hate and Ben X deal with uncomfortable issues yet leave viewers on a 'high'; the sense of discriminatory language is therefore lessened

*The racism wasn't so strong. I just didn't feel it towards the end of the film*

**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

# Challenge and resolution

The response to discriminatory language within the clips or films is another mitigator

- The swift challenge of discriminatory language (Rock Rivals, Glee and Midsomer Murders) can lessen its impact:
  - its potential to 'educate' can result in respondents feeling comfortable with a lower classification
- The overall storyline and moral message of the works can also mitigate discriminatory language and theme
  - (I Now Pronounce you Chuck & Larry and Gran Torino)

*She was challenged and it was wrong what she did. The challenge is very important. They need to show that it is wrong to use those words and it is repeated at least twice (Rock Rivals)*  
**(Mother of mentally disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*They are showing that it is not right to use it. They are agreeing that it's not right to use that word, showing they don't approve*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*If racism is challenged you are more comfortable with it*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

# Challenge and resolution

*It's not racist because their reaction negated it (Mork and Mindy clip). The horror they showed to the words said*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*He is telling you that was the way it was back then and he's now been educated through his son. It's a good message. It is acceptable at 12 as they should be challenged from an early age. Using the wrong words and correcting him is very educational (Glee)*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

*The fact that Ricky Gervais made a face like he was shocked was like a challenge (Extras)*  
**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

*He's made to look stupid and pretty immature. The challenge comes back with proper PC name (Midsomer Murders)*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*It's right to do this before they start school, so you can educate them. They are going to be hearing this in the playground so it's good if addressed*  
(Glee)  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*It's not that bad (Are you Being Served) because they are defending them*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

# Familiarity

## Language

- Impact reduced by:
  - 'words I use'
  - American words (Faggot)
  - reclaimed and reframed words
- Unfamiliar words engender a polarised response
  - will be missed by kids
  - will be picked up if sound interesting enough (mums)

## Character

- Character is playing to his or her role
  - Little Britain; Borat
- Character is known to have a sound moral centre:
  - Rachel in Friends
  - Troy in Midsomer Murders
- Villain within works
  - easy to dismiss (Mike TV in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory)

## Genre

- Expect discriminatory language (Roy Chubby Brown)

# Familiarity

*I don't know how offensive that (Mork and Mindy clip) would be on British TV*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*People know what they are expecting (Little Britain). You know the characters and the type of things that they are capable of*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*It is definitely extremely offensive, but you accept it because it is Borat. It is done in a comedic sense*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

*It's just not offensive, you can't find anything in that, and you know Little Britain*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

*Adam Sandler (I Now Pronounce you Chuck and Larry) – you can't take him seriously*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*To be quite honest I am ashamed to say I have used it myself*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*If you know Mo'Nique then you know what to expect*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# Visual vs. Verbal

The visual reinforcement of discriminatory language heightens its impact; conversely individual words can become 'throw away' and missed

- Colour Me Perfect; Dina's fall reinforces the impact of the word 'retard'
- The word 'spastic' at U, whilst universally rejected, had more of an impact in Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs than the Mermaid Game
  - the chicken's jerky movements were disliked

*It's because you see problems with movement and co-ordination and they are described as 'spastic'. That is very wrong (Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs)*

**(Mother of mentally disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*You don't see him calling someone a nigger (Jag clip), that does make a difference I think*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It's the actions that go with the teasing and the bullying and adding the word makes it worse (Colour me Perfect)*

**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

# Audience

## Anticipated viewer for the works

- Children, teens or adults:
  - raises issues about appropriateness and imitability
  - adult only audience can mitigate
  - potential to offend a wide vs. narrow audience can change views

## Showing an audience response

- Can have an impact:
  - reduces anxiety about the word nigger in Mo'Nique clip (black audience are laughing)
  - increases sense of racism; Roy Chubby Brown (audience cheers 'Paki' comment)

*Young children at U, introducing them to these words in a Disney film is not okay  
(Mermaid Discovery Game)  
(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)*

*A black audience makes a difference and black people sometimes do talk like that  
(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)*

*I think they were applauding for the wrong reasons. It makes a difference to me. You feel that they agree with him and it makes the racism stronger I think  
(Roy Chubby Brown)  
(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)*

# Consumer Advice: when is it needed and not needed?



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# Consumer Advice

## Overview

- Respondents question the role of consumer advice and worry that anything that tries to take all aspects of a film into account will be too verbose and confusing
- Interestingly, respondents were fairly relaxed about one off usage of discriminatory language, often covered by 'mild / strong language'
- There is a real concern that highlighting sexuality and disability in consumer advice is discriminatory in itself. A generic, 'contains discriminatory language/terms' can suffice
- Race operates in a different way and requires more specific consumer advice eg. contains racist language/theme

# Consumer Advice

## When is Consumer Advice needed and appreciated?

- When racism is the theme of the film
- When there is repeated and aggressive use of discriminatory terms
- When it's unexpected within the works or classification
- Old works and strong contemporary racist language
- When there's a reason to lower a classification (eg. for educational purposes)



Particularly relevant

# Consumer Advice

*I think that they have to make it clear if the theme is around racism so people can make a decision whether they want to watch it or not*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*When it is relevant to the plot it isn't so much of an issue. Where it is gratuitous, it is very relevant to have advice*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*You can discriminate against someone without being racist. It can be on the basis of the colour of their hair. Discriminatory is all encompassing*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*They should say racist language. The language is racist, he is a racist and it needs to warn people*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*If the whole story is about racism like Love and Hate, it needs to be mentioned*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*There should be something on Ashes to Ashes as there's so much in it and it's very strong language, even though at 15 you may know most of that*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

# Consumer Advice

When is Consumer Advice **not** needed and appreciated?

- One off or infrequent use of the word
- When other classification issues are deemed to be more important eg. sex, drugs, bullying
- If there are a number of mitigating factors
- Homosexual sex (should be treated the same as heterosexual sex)
- Disability as a theme
- When the title of the film and packaging conveys the theme (Special People, I Now Pronounce you Chuck & Larry, Kung Fu Flid)

# Consumer Advice Not Needed

*You can't write about homosexuals – that feels uncomfortable and we are trying to get away from things like that. Nothing should be pointed out, you would look for it then and that wouldn't be right*  
**(Female, Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*'One use of discriminatory language?'  
– no it doesn't need to say that*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*Mork and Mindy doesn't need anything being written about it. The language is too dated and it isn't powerful like the word 'nigger'*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

*You don't want to talk about homophobic, it's uncomfortable bringing it up. You wouldn't put heterosexual sex in*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

# Consumer Advice

*If they pointed out that it was homosexual sex, it would draw attention to gay people. It would say that they are different*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*When I was at school there were a lot of spastic children around and they were called spazz and it was deeply offensive to them at the time. I just wonder if a one off occurrence in a film is that important. There's a danger of making it more important by highlighting it*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*Why say about disability theme? What's that got to do with anything?  
Is it a thing to be ashamed of? It should be normal in society shouldn't it?*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*You don't need it if it was just the one scene*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# Consumer Advice

*I would say discriminatory. I would never go down the homophobic route. No matter what word that was in there, whether it was 'nigger' or 'Paki' or 'gay', they are all discriminatory. We don't have to divvy them up to say which is the most. They are all wrong. We shouldn't be using them or encouraging people to use them*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*If you start defining what sort of discrimination is in there, then people might say well we can't have racial discrimination, but homophobic discrimination is fine. You would want them all to be classified together. If you decide that it is discriminatory, then it's all the same*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*I don't find things offensive if they are in the context of the film. For example, calling someone a 'fag' or a 'queer' doesn't offend me in a film.*

*What does offend me is inequality. The classification shouldn't discriminate between things that are gay and things that are straight*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*No. People have fought for many years to get the legal age of consent for sex equal. We can't have different rules when it comes to TV or anything else*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*If it was the Shawshank Redemption and what's his name gets raped by a man, you would expect it to say 'rape scene.' Not 'gay rape scene'. You wouldn't expect it*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*You shouldn't need to be warned about gay sex or straight sex. It's sex*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

# Reaction to Specific Consumer Advice

✓✓✓

- Racist theme
- Strong and racist language
- Contains discriminatory language (to cover issues around sexuality and disability)
- Racist language/behaviour/stereotyping
- War horror

xxx

- One use of discriminatory language
- Contains discriminatory language (race)
- Disability references/language
- Racist terms and attitudes
- Moderate discriminatory language
- Homophobic sex references

# Extended Consumer Advice

Very little awareness of PBBFC and availability of extended consumer advice

- Respondents accept that those bothering to seek out more information, will welcome more detailed and explicit consumer advice

*My husband checked that recently because  
my little boy wanted to go and see Kick Ass.  
It told you what the language was and the  
decision was then no way!*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

# The Video Recordings Act and Exemptions



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# Video Recordings Act

No awareness of 'E' classification on documentaries, music, education and sport DVDs

- When prompted and discussed, provoked universal outrage:
  - no understanding or appreciation of why these works are exempt
  - undermines the classification of films
  - of genuine interest and concern (especially to parents)
  - call for BBFC classification, legally enforced, on these works

# Video Recordings Act

*I think that is really bad, especially with the music videos. They are getting more pornographic all the time*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*If they are available to the public then they should be classified*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*What so they would classify a racist film but not a racist documentary? There might be more of an effect watching a documentary because it's real*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*I think that they need to make it legally binding. If you buy a bottle of booze, they challenge you so why not on this?*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*All published material should have a rating*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*Young people might think that some of these attitudes are acceptable*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*Why classify films and not all this stuff? They are doing half their job*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*Just makes a mockery of it all*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It's insane that music videos are exempt. Lyrics can have violent or rude language*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

# Video Recordings Act

*You can't monitor everything that your kids are watching so you do need classifications*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*Why? Just to sell more of them? I don't understand why*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*None of us knew that, that means the majority of people don't know that then*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It's wrong; it's still a film*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*I would never in a million years have thought that my kid could come home with something like that without me being there*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*The titles on some of those DVD packs would attract my son and he would want to buy them*  
**(Female, 45 – 60, BC1, Scotland))**

*Yes you can't buy fags or fireworks under a certain age. Or alcohol so why? You're supposed to protect your kids. Once they are over 18 and they want to do it they will do whatever they want*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# Conclusions and Recommendations



Slesenger Research

# Conclusions and Recommendations

- The BBFC is felt to be 'spot on' in their focus and treatment of discriminatory language;
  - race however emerges as the most worrying and complex sub group, disability is the next key area. Many do not see sexuality as an overtly discriminatory issue
- Moreover, there were only one or two occasions where the public disagreed with the BBFC's classification
- If anything, the public is potentially more 'relaxed' than BBFC examiners and is quick to discuss a) whether a word is discriminatory or not and b) mitigating factors
- The most instinctively offensive words are – nigger, Paki, pikey (if aware of the term), retard, mong (Scotland) and spastic
- Dyke, arse bandit (and the likes), spazz, faggot and bent bastard are also deemed to be offensive
- Interestingly, there is a great deal of consensus across the groups:
  - those interviewed from specific minority groups acknowledge their own sensitivities, but recognise the BBFC needs to classify with the wider public in mind

# Conclusions and Recommendations

- Parents, once again, emerge as the most concerned group:
  - when discussing drugs, sex and violence of part of the Guidelines Review (2008), parents worried about imitability at 12A and 15
  - when discussing **discriminatory issues**, concerns revolved around a younger age group, U, PG and 12A and the problem of imitable language and terms
    - by 15, parents feel that teens have been exposed to the discriminatory language and have the maturity (and education) to understand the issues
- Respondents feel that every generation has a greater awareness of discriminatory issues than the one before
  - most parents (especially mothers) are gatekeepers of discriminatory language in the home and are keen to point out to young people their dislike of these terms

# Conclusions and Recommendations

- Explicit Consumer Advice is recommended on works:
  - that have a strong, discriminatory theme
  - where discriminatory language appears several times
  - where occasional usage of discriminatory language would be very unexpected
- However most agree that racism needs to be more overtly addressed than the other sub groups:
  - sexuality and disability needs to be handled with care and a more generic 'discriminatory' language/behaviour/theme is likely to suffice

# When Does the BBFC Need to Pay Attention to Discriminatory Language?

- When the works feel real and 'close' to viewers
- When discrimination is a theme and part of the tone
- When there is an obvious intention to offend
- When accompanied by bullying behaviour or violence
- When the language is directed at someone with the disability, race and sexual orientation being discussed
- Absence of mitigating factors
- Unresolved and unchallenged verbal attack or comment
- Poor fit with the work's classification or audience
- When the language is repeated, dwelt on or changes the storyline
- When it feels gratuitous within the context of the works





# Thank you!



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# Appendix

## Detailed Reactions to The Clips



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# Race clips



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# U: Dam Busters

This is a clip from the classic war drama the Dam Busters about the RAF's plan to use bouncing bombs at the end of World War II to destroy German dams.

The Wing Commander enthusiastically greets his pet Labrador.



***Nigger (dog)***

- Provokes a great deal of discussion
- However, after much deliberation accept that:
  - the film reflects the period in which it was set
  - there is no intention to offend
  - society, fortunately, has moved on
  - the theme of the film is not racist
- No need to lift classification

*But in the context of an old film, and given that it is not directed at anyone, it's ok*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It wasn't meant to be a racist slur then and the word should make no difference to the classification*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# PG: Jag

This is a clip from a long running American drama series about a group of legal Navy officers who investigate those accused of crimes in the military forces.

This scene is a legal discussion. A general has accused his black colleague of being racist about Koreans but his own attitudes towards black people are being challenged.



## *Nigger*

- Acceptable at PG:
  - discussing racial issues
  - reported not direct use of the word
  - challenged and acknowledged as being wrong

*He is talking about something that has happened. He is not directly calling somebody 'nigger'*  
**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

*There was good reason why the word 'nigger' was used and it is quite educational*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# PG: Into the Arms of Strangers

This is a clip from a documentary featuring interviews with Jewish survivors who, as children, were transported from Germany and Austria to the UK at the start of World War II.

Here a man recalls his experience of life as a child just before he left Germany.



***Jew bastard***

- Historical and educational, acceptable at PG
  - violence not shown but is reported

*Documentaries like this need to be hard hitting*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It's not discriminatory. It's just telling the story of what happened to him*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*This is about racial hatred and using the words make it work*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# 12: Outnumbered

This scene is from the popular British TV comedy drama Outnumbered, about a couple with three outspoken and challenging children.

Here, the family are having a day sightseeing trip in London.



## Spot the 'Chav'

- Not deemed to be racist in any way:
  - 'Chav' is not seen as a discriminatory term
  - acceptable at PG

*It is more of a style, like a Sloane, it's nothing compared with 'Yid' or 'Nigger' and it is comedy*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*I didn't see any discrimination at all. For me it is about yobs*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

# 12: Mork & Mindy

This is a clip from a 1980's American TV comedy series about an alien living on Earth with a female friend.

A local residents group is meeting to discuss ways to clean up their town.



*Taco benders... Spicks, Nips,  
Gooks and Bagel Breaths,  
Krauts, Polaks and Jungle  
Bunnies*

- Prompts a lot of discussion, however deemed to be a (high) 12:
  - comedic context
  - challenged and dealt with
  - old works

*The way that you know that it's not right  
to say those things by her reaction  
(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)*

*I didn't even catch half the words they  
were saying, it was so fast  
(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)*

*They were offensive words but not done  
in an offensive way. It's not offensive,  
just the way comedy was delivered  
(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)*

# 15: Mo'Nique

This is a clip from a live stand up comedy show from black US comedienne Mo'Nique



***Nigger (repeatedly)***

- Absolutely fine at 15:
  - peer to peer usage
  - comedy mitigates offence
  - (black) audiences' response; not offended, know what to expect

*If the audience was white and the stand up comedienne was white, they would say that it was racist, but it's ok because she was black and the audience was black too. It doesn't mean that it is necessarily right but it's fine*  
**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

*We are ok with it because they are ok with it*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*It is comedy, black to black and it isn't racist*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# 15: Borat

This is a clip from the comedy Borat in which a local TV presenter (played by well known performer Sasha Baron Cohen) heads to America to learn about the American way of life for the benefit of the people of Kazakhstan.

Here, journalist Borat talks enthusiastically about a local custom.



*The running of the Jew... crush that Jew chick before it hatches... Problem; economic, social and Jew*

- Polarises respondents
- Majority; acceptable at 15:
  - understand the humour and irony
  - recognise that Baron Cohen himself is Jewish, therefore cannot be seriously racist
  - ridiculous and fantastical humour
- Minority: want the classification raised to 18:
  - do not know Baron Cohen is Jewish
  - not familiar with Borat's unique humour; do not find the scene funny
  - left with a feeling of antisemitism
  - often 50+, male respondents

# 15: Borat

*No it's not really offensive.  
He's Jewish isn't he?*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*He is making fun of people who  
would be prejudiced against him*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*If he wasn't Jewish then perhaps it's racist. But  
he is taking the mickey out of antisemitism  
really. It's like 'nigger' and the black lady*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*He is Jewish and it is comedy. It  
is meant to be offensive, but it is  
acceptably offensive*  
**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*He is making fun of himself  
and it is so funny*  
**(Male, Black, 18-25, C2, Pinner)**

# 15: Shifty

This is a clip from a British urban thriller following 24 hours in the life of a young drug dealer in London.

Here, the main character is talking with his friend about his parents' attempts to get him a job.



*Stuck up Paki*

- Peer to peer usage of the word 'Paki' is acceptable at 15:
  - some concern that he is disrespectful of older members of the community, however still within 15 classification

*He is just calling it as he sees it.  
He is one  
(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)*

# 15: Shifty

*It's not racist because he is talking about his own. And he is a Paki himself really*

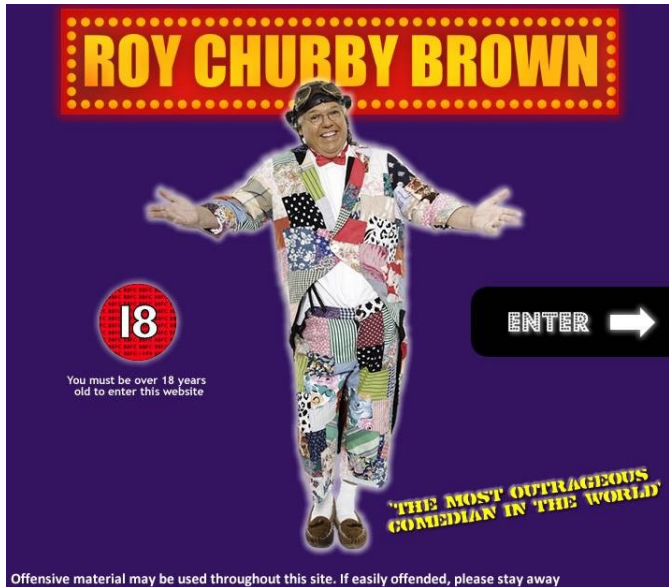
**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

*When a Paki says 'Paki', he is just shortening Pakistani. If I were to say it, it would be immediately racist. The way that we are talking about it now is not racist either*

**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

# 18: Roy Chubby Brown

This is a clip from a live stand up show from Roy Chubby Brown, a well know white British 'bad taste' comedian



*There's your paper  
money you fucking Paki  
bastard*

- Definitely an 18:
  - language in general
  - racist comments
  - audience's response
- However, well known alternative comedian who is rude about many different groups
- Those who go to see him choose his brand of humour

*This is highly offensive racism. It is right  
on the limit, but it is what he does  
(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)*

# 18: Roy Chubby Brown

*I do and I don't think that it is racist! His humour is based on race but he is having a laugh. I have been to see him. He does make a lot of racist comments but I just see him as a comedian*  
**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

*He is not just racist. He is derogatory to women as well*  
**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*What he says is outrageous but you make a choice to watch it or not*  
**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

# 18: This is England

This is a clip from a powerful British drama set in the 1980's, about a young teen coming to terms with the death of his father and who joins a Nationalist gang.

Here, the gang threatens and verbally assaults an Asian shopkeeper.



***You Paki bastard... filthy Paki  
bastard... Paki (repeatedly)  
fucking Paki cunt***

- Most definitely an 18:
  - real and credible racism
  - British; can and does happen
  - threat of violence
  - child being racist
  - racist theme of clip and works

***It was very strong, very in your face  
(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)***

***It is very true to real life. They portray  
it like it has happened to real people  
(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)***

# Disability clips



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# U: Mermaid Vanity Discovery Game (Cut for U)

This is a part of an interactive game on a DVD of the Disney classic The Little Mermaid.

In the game you answer questions to find out which mermaid you are most like.

Here is one of the menus where you can hear a character from the film talking about how badly she dances.



## *Spastic piece of kelp*

- Even though self directed and as an 'extra', could be missed:
  - decision to cut for U appreciated
  - surprising and shocking for a U and Disney
  - parents worry about immitability

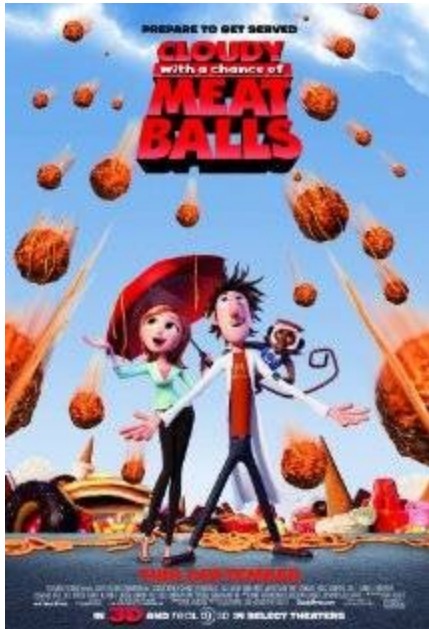
# U: Mermaid Vanity Discovery Game

*Kids adore these things. Why use this sort of language?  
It wouldn't be how disabled people talk about themselves*  
**(Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*They could say it to someone else  
and copy it. That's wrong*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*Absolutely shocked. That's Disney! I  
wouldn't want to teach young children  
that. It's not appropriate and being self  
directed makes no difference here*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# U: Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs



## *Spastic chicken*

- Again, appreciate that this comment is easy to miss or may not be seen:
  - however, the word 'spastic' is incongruent with a U classification
  - the way in which the word is used to describe movement is particularly disliked
  - the decision to cut is welcomed

*How do they think they can do that? I am shocked that it's in a children's cartoon*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*It's showing that disabled people are something to be laughed at and ridiculed. Awful at 'U'*  
**(Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

# PG: Hairspray

This is a clip from a recent comedy set in 1962 in Baltimore.

Tracey and her best friend dream of dancing on a popular TV show aimed at teenagers but are being kept off the show by the nasty Amber.



*Plastic little spastic*

- Acceptable at PG:
  - said quickly and easy to miss (and had been missed)
  - impact undermined by link with 'plastic'
  - positive message of the film overall
  - throwaway, not said to her face

*I didn't even hear that it was so fast  
(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)*

*I've watched that with both my kids  
and I have never picked that up  
(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)*

# PG: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

This is a modern live action adaptation of the classic children's book Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

The character of Mike TV is being introduced and talks about how he won his golden ticket.



*A retard could figure it out*

- Acceptable at PG:
  - easy to miss and has been missed
  - unpleasant character
  - an American character saying an 'American' word
  - not directed at anyone

*I must admit that I have got that and have never noticed it*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*If Charlie had said it you would have noticed him more but he was a horrible kid anyway*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# PG: Colour Me Perfect

This is a clip from a drama about a young woman with learning difficulties who is being treated by a doctor with a revolutionary cure.

Dina is doing some painting when some young men arrive.



## Retard

- The way in which Dina is bullied by the boys was of greater concern than the word 'retard'
- Respondents assume that this is a one off use of the word (and also hope for a resolution), and accept this clip as a high PG

*So offensive. You can't get worse than that as they can't defend themselves either physically or verbally. It's out and out cowardice and thuggery*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# PG: Colour Me Perfect

*That is the worst possible. They are bullying her and ridiculing her*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It was a direct insult and it was meant with cruelty*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*She was taking pride in her work and there was no need to ridicule her*  
**(Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*It's a low blow, it's venomous*  
**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

# PG: Speed Racer

This is a children's film about a young lad who wants to be a world class racer.

Here, one of his school friends, Trixie, is being teased by another girl because she likes him.



**Retard**

- Speed of delivery and wider context of scene led to many missing the word
- Acceptable at PG:
  - dealt with; consequence to the word
  - protagonist is unlikely to be aspirational to children
  - peer to peer and girl to girl
  - anticipated to be one off

*Would a seven year old have realised that it was offensive? It would probably be missed*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Unnecessary, but not necessarily offensive*

**(Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

# 12: Friends

This is from an episode of the sitcom Friends.

Main character, Rachel, is trying to do some laundry.



## *Total laundry spazz*

- Potentially a PG not a 12, based on clip alone
- Self deprecating and humorous
- Well known character
- 'Spazz' is less offensive than 'spastic' and the word 'laundry' softens it further
- Easy to miss and not relevant to the scene
- American; more usage of the word than in UK

*It wasn't offensive in the least. I didn't notice it. More of an American type thing. I also know Rachel is not the type of person who would be horrible*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# 12: Friends

*Because she's calling it of herself.  
It's another thing if you call yourself  
a laundry spaz you're saying aren't I  
a dickhead or an idiot*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*Use of 'spaz' putting it up to a 12  
is just madness. My daughter  
wouldn't notice that at all*

**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

*'Spaz' is an Americanism and it's  
comedy. It just means being an  
idiot nothing related to spastic*

**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

*No offence. It is comedy and self directed. She's not  
taking a pop at anyone in a wheelchair*  
**(Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

# 12: Gilmore Girls

This is a clip from an American TV drama series about a young girl and her mum.

Here, the character Rory, a student, is on work experience at a newspaper. She is trying to impress her boyfriend's father, the boss.



***I'm a total retard***

- Acceptable at 12:
  - directed at self
  - no impact on the overall scene
  - American word within an American show

*It's an American thing. It is totally okay*  
**(Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50,  
BC1, Pinner)**

# 12: Rock Rivals

This is a spoof comedy drama about a talent show like the X Factor or Pop Idol.

Here, the character Angel, an American contestant who is doing well, is being filmed while she meets her fans.



*You spazz... so do not need that disabled vote*

*We say it all the time where we come from*

- Offensive and shocking
- However, acceptable at 12:
  - challenged
  - shown to be disapproved of by co – presenter and wider audience
  - character is not a hero
  - she is American (and therefore may have different attitudes)
  - 'spazz' and not 'spastic'

*It makes her look really bad and ignorant, and it was challenged*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# 12: Rock Rivals

*Totally unacceptable. She meant it to be nasty*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*That was somebody that was in a wheelchair.  
So it was meant to take the mickey out of  
the fact that they were disabled*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# 15: Extras



- Acceptable at 15, based on clip, could even be a 12
- Not deemed to be offensive to disabled people
  - if anything, exposes people's ignorance
  - gently educational
  - funny (especially for disabled respondents)

*That would happen in real life, it is okay and I don't find it offensive. It is just human nature and it is educative*

**(Mother of Physically Disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

# 15: Extras

*The way it was in context, it was all put over, no I didn't find it offensive*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*I think it does demonstrate that most people are uncomfortable and when you get something like cerebral palsy they do think the person's dumb because they are shaking*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

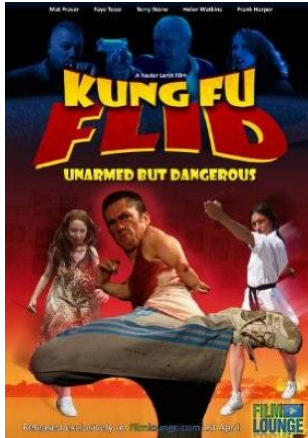
*It shows ignorance and that's what it's telling you. It is sending quite a positive message*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# 18: The Making of Kung Fu Flid

This is a DVD extra for a low budget British martial arts film.

The main actor and director talk about the journey they have gone through trying to get their film made and the actor talks about why he thought people wouldn't let him star in an action film.



*I'm the Kung Fu Flid*

- Totally acceptable, could even be a PG:
  - self directed
  - claiming the word for himself
  - protagonist is clearly comfortable with the term

*It was fine because he was talking about himself*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*What you're saying to yourself is you've got the short arms, you can hardly hide that. So he doesn't try to, he's open about it. So it's ok to say. I suppose in that context if you're a nigger you can call yourself a nigger*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# Sexuality clips



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# PG: The Two Ronnies

This is from the end of an old British TV comedy.

The comedians are telling a series of jokes in the style of newsreaders.



*Queer nose and  
throat specialist*

- Acceptable at PG; not discriminatory:
  - affectionate humour
  - old fashioned word

*Don't find it offensive in the least. In  
fact 'queer' could have no sexual  
innuendo or reference*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2,  
Scotland)**

# PG: The Two Ronnies

*It is not offensive at all. It is an  
old fashioned word from the 50's*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

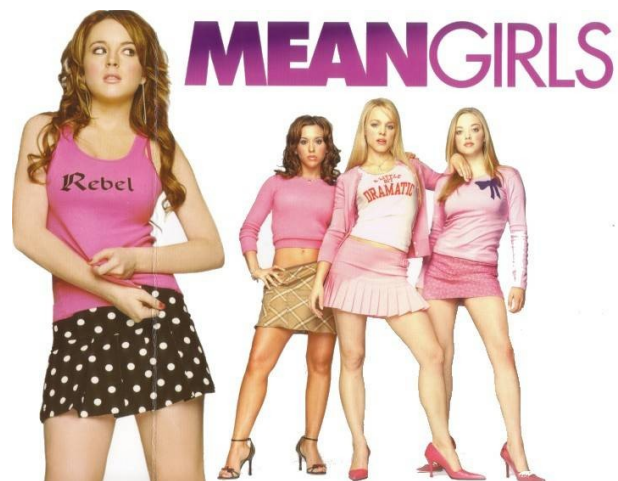
*Making a pun out of it does  
soften it somehow*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*Fine, not offensive, I would be  
surprised if a gay person found  
that offensive*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# PG: Mean Girls

This is a short trailer for an American teen drama about High School.

Three girls talk about the names they use to describe friends who they don't really like



*That's so gay*

- Acceptable given teen usage of the word 'gay'
  - not discriminatory in any way

*That's all okay at PG. It's teen girls at school. It's pretty harmless*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

# PG: Mean Girls

*Kids say 'gay' all the time  
– I say it as well*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*It means something totally different*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*Today, it means more 'annoying'  
than 'homosexual'*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*Exactly what I was describing, a  
word for 'silly' or 'stupid'*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# PG: Are You Being Served, Extras

This is a documentary about the show *Are You Being Served* which was very popular in the 1970's and 1980's.

In it a performer and the writers talk about the views of TV executives when they saw the characters for the first time.



*Poof*

- Acceptable at PG:
  - documentary
  - not a discriminatory term nowadays
  - positive outcome
  - comedy

*Are you Being Served?  
No problem with that. That's just the way  
people were back then – 'get rid of the gay  
guy' – a reflection of the times  
(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)*

# PG: Are You Being Served

*It's not a word that is used nowadays*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

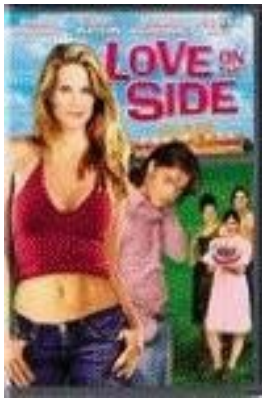
*If people really wanted to offend gay people they would use another word*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*They are quoting and sticking up for him. Slating the guy who'd used it*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# 12: Love on the Side

This is a documentary about the Canadian romantic comedy.

Linda is at a party talking about the music.



*Lesbian... muff diver... carpet muncher... clam shucker... women who wear sensible shoes*

- Language is quite strong but there are mitigating factors:
  - humour
  - woman in control, she is using the words to mock him
  - unfamiliar, could be missed by younger audience
- On balance, a high 12

*I don't think that kids would know these words or even notice them really*

**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*Shocked! My chin would hit the ground if my 12 year old used that. Very graphic, you're not going to find those words in a dictionary!*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# 12: Love on the Side

No that's more sex references than discrimination. She is not the one being discriminated against. She is the one using the words  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

I wouldn't imagine 12 year olds would know that and it isn't appropriate for them. They would be asking questions  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

They are graphic words. You can explain lesbian to a child but not these words  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

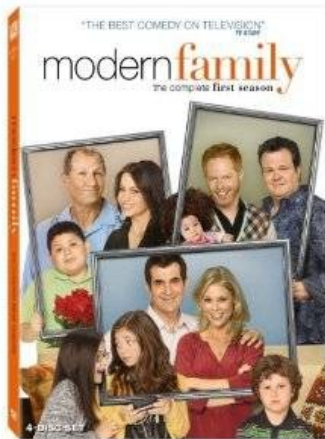
It's a bad example for kids; it's the opposite of the Glee thing. The words have been said and there is no come back. Watching that, if a kid didn't know better, they would think it's OK to call lesbians any of those things  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

And the woman that was using those words was in defense of KD Lang, and of lesbians. It was not used aggressively. If it was an aggressive tone, it would have been different. If it was him saying it, it would have been snide, an attack. Then that would have been offensive  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

# 12: Modern Family

This is a scene from an American sitcom released on DVD about modern family life.

A couple are in the kitchen when one of their fathers comes in. He wants to know their opinion on whether he is attractive.



*If I was in a gay bar... would you check me out...*

- Humorous
- Not discriminatory in any way
- Should not be classified differently from heterosexual flirting

*I think that should be a PG. There is nothing offensive about that*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

# 12: Modern Family

*There was nothing offensive in there*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*I wouldn't even give it a PG. There was nothing rude, nothing derogatory. If that was a man asking two women what they thought of him out of 10, I wouldn't think anything of it. So to me, it's the equivalent*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

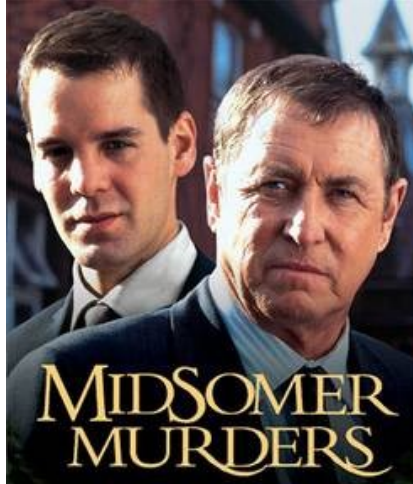
*It's a lifestyle choice, not derogatory or insulting, more factual. No real mention and could be missed*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*No offense at all. It's the dad's awkwardness*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# 12: Midsomer Murders

This is a scene from a popular British crime drama, Midsomer Murders.

Detectives Troy and Barnaby are discussing a case where someone was killed for seeing a couple having sex.



## *Arse bandit*

- Unexpected within the context of Midsomer Murders
- However, remains at 12:
  - challenged, Troy is ridiculed
  - one off mention
  - audience; not young people/children

*That's shocking! Totally unexpected.  
This is his view and it is discriminatory, though he is put right  
(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)*

*Out of the blue, a touch surprised.  
Could be overlooked though  
(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)*

# 12: Midsomer Murders

*He does get into trouble for saying it and anyway, kids won't be watching it*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*That's fine. It's been dealt with. He has reprimanded him for using the term. He almost made him look stupid for using a derogatory term. That makes it better*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*He told him that he was wrong so if kids are watching, because he has jumped in, they will know that it is wrong to say things like that*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*It would probably be missed if a young person was watching and I'm not sure young people would want to watch this anyway?*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

# 12/12A: Hancock

This is a scene from Hancock, a blockbuster sci-fi thriller starring Will Smith.

He plays a superhero who has a bad reputation.

He is talking to a man who is trying to help him clean up his image.



*Homo*

- Mitigated by:
  - comic and tongue in cheek
  - less familiar, American word
  - non-directed
  - light - hearted within context of the scene; arguing
  - homo is not an inherently offensive word
- Many had seen this film and had missed the word
- Acceptable at 12/12A

*For me, it's too American to be offensive  
(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)*

# 12/12A: Hancock

*I don't think that it's offensive.  
It's not said in an aggressive way*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*It's not bad at all. Just a bit of  
swearing*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*I don't think that kids would pick  
up on that word*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*Homo is not a strong word or a  
word that gets used a lot*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

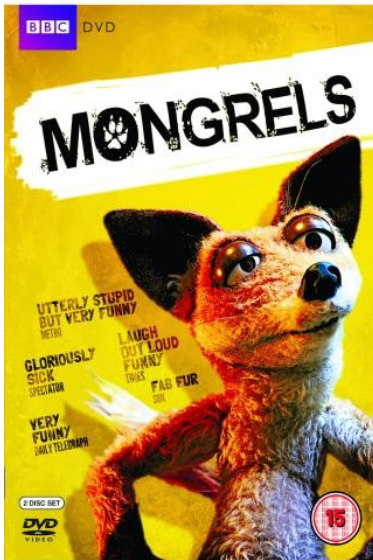
*Not offensive. I've seen that so many  
times and it's never dawned on me.  
Inoffensive, just homo, not homophobic*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# 15: We Are Mongrels

This is a comedy aimed at teenagers and young adults.

The lead characters are puppets.

Here one fox is challenged by his brother about his lifestyle.



*Gay Elderflower tea...  
Tame Little Nonce*

- Bullying tone and theme of clip and aggressive use of the word 'gay' is a concern
- Puppetry does mitigate, however the scene feels quite real
- 15, not lower, is felt to be an acceptable classification

*It's not nice because he uses the word 'nonce' in it. Nonce is like a pervert, like a paedophile*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*It was angry and he was bullying him so it was offensive*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

# 15: We Are Mongrels

*It's aggressive directed language and if it was there throughout it would be a concern*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*It was strong language and I wouldn't want my children to say 'nonce'*

**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*There are words in there that I didn't like. Nonce is a paedophile, isn't it? He is being referred to as gay all the way through, then he labels him a nonce as well. If you are being super sensitive, then you wouldn't want that. There is a big thing at the moment about all gay men being paedophiles and all paedophiles being gay men, which obviously isn't true. But you wouldn't want to reinforce that*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*If it's a dad storming into his son's room and saying whatcha gay this and whatcha gay that, then that is different. It separates it for me if it's puppets and being comedy*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*The aggressive context does change things, even though they are puppets, it is directed.*

*'You nonce' is an aggressive way of saying 'you gay' – linked to paedophilia and prisons*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*Because they are puppets it distances it a bit*

**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

# 15: Little Britain

*Full of gays... no place for an out gay man... the homophobes were very homophobic... they're bum chums...sliding down some pole... lezzing it up... mad for muff... bit poofy... teaming with todger... jizzem gamboree*

This is a sketch from a popular British comedy show.

Here the characters are on holiday and Dafydd meets someone he knows from home.



- Crude, hilarious, 'gay' references but acceptable at 15:
  - not aggressive, self directed
  - no homophobic intent (Matt Lucas is known to be gay)
  - familiar character and catchphrases

*It's supposed to be like that. It's the characters, the gay scene. It's friendly, creative and not aggressive. Good humoured*

**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# 15: Little Britain

*It is said in a comedy way. It is not to offend anyone, it is to make everybody laugh*

**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*It's the comedy. It's tongue in cheek. Like the woman from Love on the Side. It's done in an affectionate way; you are on the same side. Myfanwy was using the terms affectionately*

**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

# 15: Ashes to Ashes

*All they exchanged were bodily fluids... shit stabbing... poofs... a fairy, queen, fudge packing ponce... bum boy... arse bandit... woofter. Sweaty, masculine sex... cock he sucks*



- Felt to be a very high 15, for many, an 18:
  - bullying and aggressive tone
  - views are challenged but not changed
  - relentlessly crude
  - group of men versus one woman
- 1980's context does not always mitigate

*There's a lot of homophobic terms in that and it's quite aggressive*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

*More violent use of 'poofter' and 'shit stabber'. There is so much homophobic language and he's not joking*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# 15: Ashes to Ashes

*It's linking gay people with committing crimes*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*I didn't get that it was supposed to be ironic and funny*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*If you had watched it back in the 80's it would have been fine. That's how it was. Now it's not acceptable. They are policemen and they are saying it aggressively*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

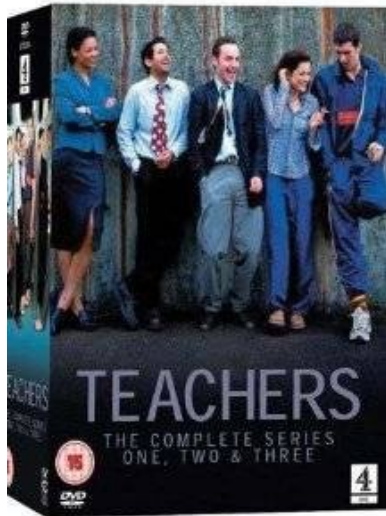
*It was the way that they were going on about it when she was trying to defend him*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*I would have put that as an 18. There is some strong language in there*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

# 15: Teachers

This is a clip from a British TV drama series called Teachers about staff at a comprehensive school.

Here, two men are talking about a female member of staff.



***Wears comfortable shoes... she's a lezzzer***

- Potentially a 12, not felt to be offensive or homophobic
  - however, lesbians interviewed disliked this clip and the way in which men dismissed lesbians as 'lezzers'

*It was not very offensive. They were just colloquialisms*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*No, it was purely factual. She is a lezzzer. There are a few clichés and stereotypes, but nothing offensive*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*Subtly spoken, calm, relaxed and no aggression. He's known for being a bit dim too*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

# Detailed Reactions to the Films: Race

## Grand Torino (15)

- Acceptable at 15 (minority, 12A)
- Broader storyline subsumes racist issues, no need for specific Consumer Advice
- 'Strong language and violence' ✓✓✓

## Love and Hate (15)

- Acceptable at 15
- Thought to be an excellent, well balanced, real film with educational value for teen audience
- Mixed views on the need to reference racist theme in Consumer Advice

## The Believer (15)

- A high 15, often 18 due to
  - overall tone and tension
  - relentless violence and aggression
  - unhappy ending
  - real and contemporary issues
  - strong language
- Need for Consumer Advice
- 'Racist theme'

# Gran Torino

*The racism wasn't so strong. I just didn't feel it towards the end of the film*

**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It didn't feel like racism towards the end of the film, it just felt like banter*

**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*I think that it had a racist theme but it wasn't racist. He was on their side even if he had racist views*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*An outstanding film with good meaning. The moral of the story outweighs the violence*

**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# Love and Hate

*It was much more powerful than Gran Torino, much more true to life*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*A lot of 15 year olds could learn something from this film so they should be able to see it*

**(Female, 25-40, BC1, Birmingham)**

*A total reality film. True of Bradford*

**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

*It is good for teenagers to watch and has good educational content*

**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# The Believer

*He wanted to kill a Jew basically. There was so much hatred towards the Jews and he was portraying terrorism as well*

**(Female, 20-30, Asian, BC1, Birmingham)**

*It should have said something like 'contains scenes of strong racial abuse' or something like that*

**(Male, 18-25 years, C2D, Leeds)**

*Yes, it should say something about racism because it's so scary. It's strong violence, language and racism*

**(Male, 45-60, C2D, Edgware)**

# Detailed Reactions to the Films: Disability

## **Special People (12)**

- Acceptable at 12
- Educational and endearing
- 'Disability theme'; Consumer Advice rejected

## **Inside I'm Dancing (15)**

- Acceptable, potentially 12/12A for some
- Peer to peer, self directed language deemed appropriate
- Disability not relevant to Consumer Advice

# Special People

*Weighing up the sex references and language I would say 12*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Why would you have disability theme?*  
*Not necessary at all*  
**(Mother of physically disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*There is no strong language or explicit scenes. 12 seems about right*  
**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*You can read about the film and I would feel uncomfortable saying disability. We are trying to get away from things like that*  
**(Male, 25-40, C2D, Pinner)**

# Inside I'm Dancing

*Had excellent issues towards prejudice  
and disability*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Content seemed more appropriate for 15, but it's real and  
between the friends and the language is all self – directed.  
Visibly moving and educational*

**(Mother of physically disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*Both my 12 and 13 year old children  
enjoyed this film and were visibly moved  
at the end*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# Detailed Reactions to the Films: Disability

## Cast Offs (15)

- Mostly acceptable, however minority call for 18 classification due to sex references
- Peer to peer language is acceptable

## Ben X (15)

- Acceptable at 15, minority felt it could be 12/12A (wider message)
- Key issue is bullying and this could be mentioned in Consumer Advice (as bullying but not discriminatory behaviour)

# Cast Off

*I thought that was excellent and showed disabled people just like everyone else. They can be just as mean and cruel like we all can. No different*

**(Mother of physically disabled, 35-50, BC1, Pinner)**

*The point of that film was to show that's the way they'd been made by the way they'd been treated by other people*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*I don't look at people as disabled because I think we are all disabled in some shape or form. I just think it was nice to see they are equally as messed up as the rest of us are. But I don't use that sort of language; my kids don't use that sort of language to each other. They wouldn't dream of speaking to their friends like that so I think disabled or abled didn't make any difference*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

# Ben X

*There was no bad language, but perhaps disturbing scenes of bullying and mild drug use. Good message, relevant and educational. I could sit down with my son and watch this. More kids use video games for escapism these days*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*I would say 15 because of the bullying he went through. It was quite harrowing in the first half even though the last part was very uplifting*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

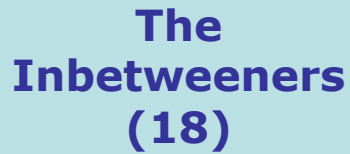
*This film would have a positive impact on teenagers with regards to bullying, suicide and autism*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

*Bullying and the drugs scene in the park were quite shocking. It was horrible with repeated use of the word 'retard'*

**(Female, 45-60, BC1, Scotland)**

# Detailed Reactions to the Films: Disability



## The Inbetweeners (18)

- A definite 18 because of the 'frequent, crude, strong sex references'
- Disabled character never spontaneously mentioned, when prompted
  - not discriminated against
  - unpleasant character

# The Inbetweeners

*18. Absolutely awful but teenagers  
will love it*

**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*The fact that the boy was in a  
wheelchair was a side issue, they  
didn't like him when he was normal*  
**(Mixed, 55+, BC1, Birmingham)**

*I don't think that wheelchair  
users would be offended*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

# Detailed Reactions to the Films: Sexuality

## **Glee (12)**

- Acceptable
- Some strong language but resolved and a positive outcome
- 'Contains discriminatory language and behaviour' acceptable given wider audience (likely to be younger than 12)

## **I now Pronounce you Chuck & Larry (12/15)**

- Acceptable at 12/15 given overall positive outcome
- At 12, 'contains discriminatory language and behaviour' is welcomed

# Glee

*It dealt with the issue in a very sensitive way and I don't think that gay people would be offended at all by it*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*The word 'retard' was used defensively not in an offensive way*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*Yeah, a 12. He used the word aggressively, but all the words were kept within that scene, the words 'retard' and 'faggy'. But they were dealt with straight away by the dad. He said that both words were not appropriate. So maybe it should even be a PG, because if you are talking about the whole show, morally it's very good*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*Really excellent message and he used the word in anger and was challenged. Very good*  
**(Male, 25-40, BC1, Scotland)**

*I thought this was really good. Educational and can be used to explain to children*  
**(Gay female, 35-45, C2, Scotland)**

# I now Pronounce you Chuck and Larry Quotes

*My little boy loved it. He watched it loads  
and over and over again. He didn't pick up  
on anything being offensive*

**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*It wasn't offensive, it was funny*

**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

# Detailed Reactions to the Films: Sexuality

## **I Love You Phillip Morris (15)**

- Mostly acceptable at 15, however older male respondents in particular, struggled with the content at times
- 'Strong sex and language' is acceptable Consumer Advice – strong views expressed on overtly discussing homosexual sex

## **The Inbetweeners (18)**

- Peer to peer, playground 'gay' references are accepted
- However, linking homosexual teacher with paedophilia is an issue for gay male respondents

# The Inbetweeners

*The only bit that is in there that is offensive to me is there is a paedophile in there and he is a gay bloke. That is stereotyping*  
**(Male, gay, 20-35, BC1, Leeds)**

*The male paedophile teacher – that was unacceptable*  
**(Female, 18-25, BC1, South)**

*It's not offensive when they are saying it amongst themselves*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**

*It's how teenagers talk these days*  
**(Female, 25-40, CD2, Leeds)**