



annual report 2002





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It was an honour to be invited to become the President of the British Board of Film Classification. The Board is a private company which has, over many years since its foundation in 1913, established itself as a semi-official regulator. As such it is an oddly British compromise. But I have always believed it to be a valuable institution.

It has been in good hands under my predecessor Andreas Whittam Smith and its admirable and experienced Director Robin Duval. Indeed I want to pay tribute to the work of my predecessor. Apart from the many decisions on individual films and video works, he did much to enhance the transparency and accountability of the Board's work: to bring it into the open, to explain how it works and, equally important, to make sure its operations could withstand the resulting scrutiny.

In particular it was his initiative which led the Board to draw up, to consult on and in due course to publish Guidelines setting out the basis of its policies and the criteria for the different age classifications. It was obviously the right thing to do; and if it had not been done no doubt his successor would have taken the same path. It was good that he was awarded the CBE in the New Year 'for services to the film industry'.

Of course the Guidelines cannot prevent argument and controversy. Nothing could or should do that. But they help to ensure that public debate or criticism has a better foundation. For example, against the background of the Board's decision on a particular film it can be argued either that the Guidelines are wrong or that the Board applied them wrongly (or, conceivably, both). But any BBFC decision, whether one agrees with it or not, can be understood in terms of declared policy in the Guidelines, which themselves reflect the outcome of public consultation.

Having Guidelines published in accessible form is such a good idea that the puzzle is that it had not been done before. In fact, even in the early days after the Board began work in 1913, those working then drew up their own lists of things which needed to be cut. But they were not as coherent and systematic as the present Guidelines. Nonetheless they are of considerable interest and show how much the world has changed, and how far the Board's approach has changed too. For example, the Board's 1926 Annual Report contained a long list of grounds on which films had been censored, which included these:

- comic treatment of incidents connected with death
- painful insistence on realism in death-bed scenes
- themes which are likely to wound the just susceptibilities of our Allies
- white men in a state of degradation amidst native surroundings
- officers in British regiments shown in a disgraceful light
- painful hospital scenes
- workhouse officials shown in an offensive light
- suggestive, indecorous and semi-nude dancing
- marital infidelity and collusive divorce
- men and women in bed together
- 'crook' films, in which sympathy is enlisted for the criminals.

Inevitably, when I was appointed, some of the comments implied that my personal views and inclinations (more permissive? more restrictive?) would make a difference. Of course they may do. But this line of comment – implying that everything turns on any individual's personal views – underestimates the extent to which the Board offers professional and systematic regulation. This is what distinguishes the Board's decisions and means that – while they may sometimes be wrong, or simply disagreed with – they deserve to be taken seriously.



8 Mile '15'

About Schmidt '15'

City of God '18'

Ocean's Eleven '12'

Goldmember '12'



Chicago '12A'



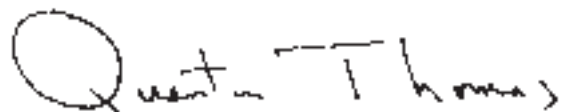
There are a number of factors:

- the published Guidelines, already mentioned, setting out the Board's policy and approach
- the cadre of professional 'examiners' who undertake the initial examination of films and video-works, and assess the appropriate classification. (I have been impressed since my arrival by the calibre of the Board's staff and by the quality of judgement, reflected in their written reports and collective discussions.)
- the arrangements, including training, peer discussions and consultation and quality control by senior staff designed to ensure interchange and consistency
- the Consultative Council and the Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing, which meet regularly and make advice available from those with relevant interests and expertise, and from people of independence of mind and distinction
- the expertise and experience of the Deputy Director and Director, managing the Board's work, always available to give counsel to the Presidential team
- the other members of the Presidential team, Janet Lewis-Jones and John Taylor – two experienced and able Vice Presidents already in post for some years and who have, I am delighted to say, agreed to serve a further period. Apart from helping to determine individual cases, they ensure the Board's work as a whole is subject to independent oversight
- the Council of Management, under its Chairman Ewart Needham, ensuring that the Board is properly funded and managed, but without involvement in classification decisions or policy.

None of this means that the Board's decisions are invariably right or immune to challenge. Indeed comment and criticism provides valuable evidence of where the Board's approach might diverge from what the public want or expect. This is crucial as it is of the essence that the Board and its decisions should enjoy public confidence.

Indeed it is the need for public confidence which rebuts the cynical view that the Board, having originally been created by commercial interests in the film world, is in their pocket, with the implication that it is more permissive than it otherwise would be. Of course the Board – its staff, advisory bodies, senior management and the Presidential team – is not involved in, and could not be recruited to, a conspiracy of that kind. But there is a more telling point, which even the cynics may find more convincing. Namely, that such an approach would not meet commercial needs, or the public interest. For what is needed, and what led commercial interests (to their credit) to take the initiative, with Government encouragement, to establish the Board, was regulatory reliability and predictability. And that can only be achieved if the Board, and the system it administers, enjoys public – and in turn political and media – confidence. Public confidence can be put at risk if the Board is seen either as too restrictive (imagine if we attempted to enforce the 1926 list quoted above) or too permissive.

What lies ahead? I believe the Guidelines must remain central to the Board's work and to ensuring that its decisions are explained and properly understood. We shall be alert to the need to revise them to keep abreast of public concerns.



Sir Quentin Thomas

April 2003





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It has been a remarkable twelve months.

### Listening to the Public

The most important development of the year was the result of listening carefully to the public. The outcome was a new cinema classification. In the **Annual Report** two years ago we recognized that some parents preferred to decide for themselves whether or not '12' rated films were right for their younger children. We knew from their letters and from talking to the public that the absolute prohibition on under 12s going to see these films in the cinema was not universally welcome. But how widespread was that feeling? What did the public, particularly parents, actually want?

We ran a pilot exercise in Norwich for seven weeks at the end of 2001 when children under 12 were allowed to see '12' films with an adult. We asked people coming out of the cinemas for their views in addition to polling in the street and focus groups. We followed that up during 2002 with a national survey involving over 4000 people from around the UK. The outcomes were almost identical. Seventy per cent – for parents it was 75 per cent – were in favour of changing to an advisory rating *providing* two elements were included: the accompaniment of under 12s by an adult, and some easily available information about the kind of content that might concern them.

We asked film distributors and cinema exhibitors to add a short line of information to their publicity for '12' rated films – on posters, in television commercials and in the local press. Only when that was properly in place and working nationally were we prepared to make the transition to the new advisory '12A' (with adult accompaniment) on 30 August. It was worth the wait. The change has been almost universally welcomed. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the 'Consumer Advice' and the views of the public over time.

### Listening to the Industry

But while we have listened to the public we have also been listening to the industry.

To some extent the industry's needs are the same as the public's. Both expect to understand why works are given a particular classification rating, and for those ratings to be applied consistently. The BBFC addressed this in Autumn 2000 with the publication of detailed classification Guidelines, after a comprehensive consultation process. We have followed through with a rigorous programme of training for new examiners, and a system of upward referral whenever doubts or difficulties arise, to ensure that these standards are applied reliably.

But in an increasingly competitive environment, the industry also expects speed and efficiency.

In the last four years the BBFC workload has more than doubled to 11,978 works submitted for classification in 2002. Most of this increase is accounted for by the rise in videos and especially DVDs. The Board's staff has increased over the same period only from 52 to 61. That is a huge rise in productivity. Most strikingly, the turnaround rate has fallen from up to 30 days to around a quarter of that time.

The BBFC is now a modern, stream-lined, technology-led business. The confidential Extranet, which allows clients instant access to information about the progress of their submissions, has been a major success. Our un-feed service of evidence to the police and trading standards officers, for use in prosecutions of illegal traders, has been called upon increasingly. We have embarked upon a major programme of refurbishment designed to liberate more working space within our building, maximize the use of our present resources, and avoid expensive office overspill.

There are other benefits for the industry. The Board had not raised its fees since 1999. However, an unprecedented consequence of increased productivity was a six per cent rebate to the industry at the end of 2001 followed six months later by a general reduction of video classification fees by 12 per cent and of film classification fees by five per cent.

It has been an important year too for policy.

### **The Video Appeals Committee (VAC)**

In 2002 the Video Appeals Committee heard the first appeal against a BBFC video determination since 1999 and only the sixteenth appeal against a BBFC decision since the BBFC was given responsibility for classifying videos in 1985. The video work concerned was *The Last House on the Left*, which the BBFC had refused to classify in 2001 unless cuts were made. The Board was particularly concerned by the work's treatment of sexual violence, which was felt to be both unacceptable to the public at large and likely to lead to harm to vulnerable viewers within the terms of the Video Recordings Act. The Video Appeals Committee found unanimously in the Board's favour. In doing so, it provided a ringing endorsement of a robust sexual violence policy.

### **Cuts and Rejects**

More works were cut in 2002 than in previous years. But this may be misleading. To an extent more works were cut simply because more were submitted. And while the figures indicate a continuing toughness with unacceptable material (especially sexual violence), they also partly reflect a greater desire by distributors for the lower – and more commercially viable – ratings which can only be obtained under the Guidelines by 'cuts for category'. At the '18' level only two cinema films were cut during 2002. An uncut 'R18' rating would have been available to *The*

*Pornographer*. But in the case of *Ich! the Killer*, no category could have contained a quantity of sexualised violence which made it the most heavily cut cinema film since 1994. A much more frequent cause for adult level cutting was the inclusion of abusive and violent elements in 'R18' porn videos. The Board continues to maintain a very strict line on such material, stricter in fact than in most of Europe. In 2002 this meant that the Board required cuts to about 16 per cent of all 'R18's submitted.

Only two works were rejected entirely in 2002, both videos.

*Hooligans* was a highly irresponsible 'documentary' about soccer hooliganism, which set acts of violence to a pulsing soundtrack. The other was a former 'video nasty' entitled *Love Camp 7* which voyeuristically exploited sexual attacks on women in a Nazi prison camp. Neither distributor exercised their right to appeal to the VAC.

### **Controversy**

The Board rarely gets media headlines, however, for what it cuts. In 2002, as in other years, the biggest story was about a decision *not* to wield the censor's scissors. In 2001, we had asked for only a single cut to the controversial French film, *Baise-Moi*. But the excitement this provoked did not survive the film's much delayed cinema release in May 2002, which passed with virtually no public comment or concern. Later in the year, the Board passed another French film, *Irreversible*, this time entirely without cuts. Again, media assumptions were made about a (largely unseen) film which were not entirely supported by the experience of the work itself early in 2003. Certainly it was a tough and very challenging work. It did not, however, breach the Board's published Guidelines on possible harm (a view confirmed by a consultant psychologist) or sexual violence or any other matter.



Gangs of New York '18'





Marc '18'  
Donnie Darko '15'  
Bend It Like Beckham '12'  
Catch Me If You Can '12A'

The Board was at last able to classify uncut *Straw Dogs*, which had been repeatedly refused a video certificate throughout the 1980s and 1990s because of its central rape scene. The version considered this year was more complete than previously and this had the perhaps unexpected effect of moderating earlier concerns. The viewer was no longer left with the misleading (and dangerous) impression that the woman involved actually enjoyed being raped. After taking advice from clinical psychologists specialising in sexual harms, and showing the film to public focus groups, the Board passed the work for the first time '18' uncut for video and DVD release, over 30 years after it was originally made.

The Board has sought advice from psychologists or psychiatrists on only seven occasions since 1998. However, three of these occasions have occurred in the past year. The third related to another French cinema film *A Ma Soeur!* which had been classified '18' uncut for cinema release. Two clinical psychologists advised that, on video, a rape scene involving a young girl could be used as a 'grooming tool' by paedophiles. In the context of an '18' rated cinema release, which effectively prohibits access by a child, this was not a concern. But the much more private and domestic context of a video viewing was another and rather more problematic matter. Accordingly the Board required that the work be cut for video and DVD release.

### Thanks

In highlighting a few of the more striking events of the year, I risk overlooking its real character. This has been one of regular and daily commitment, to which all members of staff have contributed at every level. The basic figures tell the story of how exceptionally busy they have been. We have also been very fortunate in the advice received from the Presidential Team and (on financial and administrative matters) from the Council of Management. There have

been changes. We shall greatly miss the wisdom of Andreas Whittam Smith who stepped down from the Presidency in mid-year but we have the ideal successor in Sir Quentin Thomas. With the Vice Presidents, Janet Lewis-Jones and Lord Taylor of Warwick, the Board is in fine shape for the future. Another change has been to the Chairmanship of Council, with Brian Smith succeeded by Ewart Needham. I have personally benefitted greatly from Brian's guidance, as well as from the good sense and experience of the Members of Council. This is set to continue under Ewart's leadership.

### In Conclusion

I should finally recall the sad event which brought 2002 to a close. On Christmas Eve, James Ferman, who had been the Board's Director for nearly 24 years, died. He is remembered by all who knew him and worked with him and will be greatly missed.



Robin Duval





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## Accountability

The Board's regulatory responsibilities make it ultimately accountable, for classification policy and practice, to the public. Another important constituency, however, is the film industry, who pay fees to have their works classified, and to whom the Board owes a duty of care and efficiency. This section deals with how we have addressed our obligations to the public and the industry.

### *New Film Category Introduced*

2002 saw the introduction of a new category, the '12A'. It replaced the old mandatory '12' – for cinema only – and allows children under twelve to see films, provided they are accompanied by an adult.

The initiative to consider a change was prompted by the fact that parents had repeatedly questioned cinemas and the Board as to why they were not able to take their younger children into '12' films. The development and maturity of children varies enormously around this age, and parents have frequently taken the view that they are best placed to decide what their child can or cannot cope with.

The Board undertook a substantial research programme to investigate public opinion before any possible change. The BBFC's **Annual Report 2001** reported on encouraging results obtained from a pilot of the new category (then called 'PG-12') in all the cinemas in Norwich, where in-depth interviews revealed a large majority in favour of change. This was backed up in 2002 by a national survey involving 4000 people from across the UK. This exercise produced almost identical results to the pilot, with just over 70 per cent of respondents favouring a change. When just parents were considered the figure rose to 75 per cent. However, this level of support was only achieved when two important conditions were attached to the new rating: children under 12 should be accompanied by an adult; and

there should be readily available information about the content of films to enable parents to make informed choices about their children's viewing.

This latter condition was conveyed to the film industry, who agreed after discussions to display the Board's Consumer Advice on all posters, print advertisements and television commercials for 'U', 'PG' and '12A' films. It was also agreed to include the advice in newspaper listings for '12A' films (see section on **Consumer Advice**). On this basis, the '12A' was introduced on 30 August, incidentally bringing the UK into line with the majority of Europe, USA, Canada and Australia, where categories for this age-group are also advisory rather than mandatory.

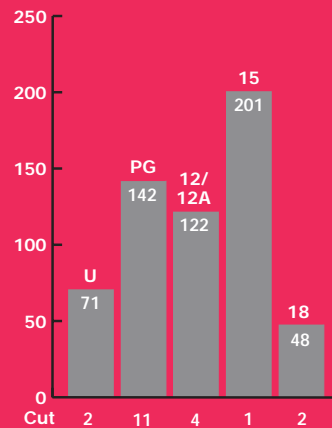
At the end of 2002, four months into the life of '12A', feedback from cinemas and public had been positive. The Board will continue to monitor the situation, including the important issue of provision of Consumer Advice.

### **Consumer Advice**

Consumer Advice, detailing the content of films and videos, has in fact been produced by the Board for every work classified since 1997. It is available on the Board's website and on the packaging of many videos but had not, until 2002, been a regular part of the publicity for feature films shown at the cinema.

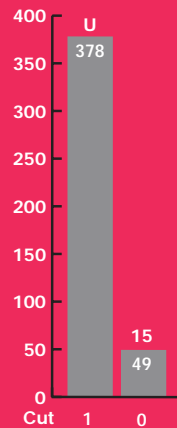
The first film to be classified '12A', *The Bourne Identity*, came with the information that it 'contains moderate violence and one use of strong language'. It was followed soon by the re-released *Spider-man* whose Consumer Advice told parents that it 'contains some scenes of strong fantasy violence'. Some distributors have since begun displaying Consumer Advice on posters for all their films, from 'U' to '18'.

**Film**  
Total – 585

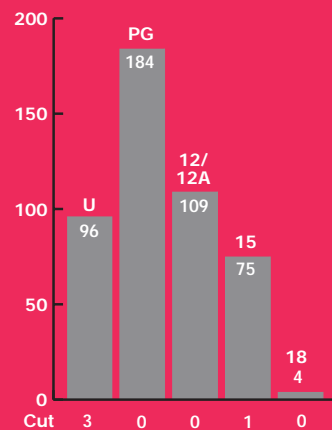


Change of distributor: 1

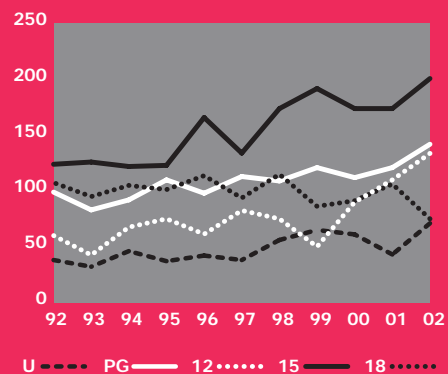
**Film Advertisements**  
Total – 427



**Film Trailers**  
Total – 468



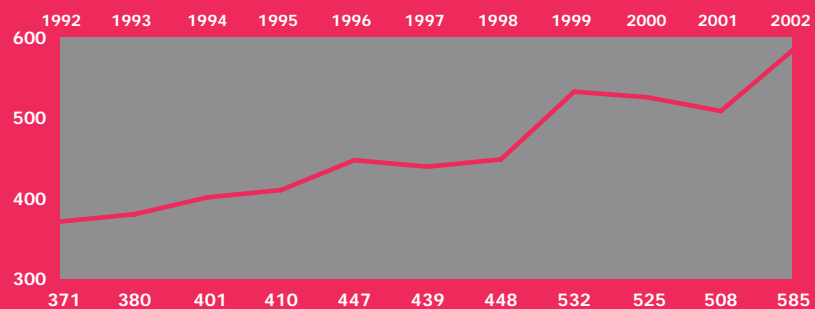
**Film Statistics**



**Film Statistics table**

	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02
U	38	32	46	37	42	38	56	65	61	43	71
PG	99	83	92	110	98	113	109	121	112	121	142
12	34	54	60	49	66	60	40	72	88	107	122 (inc 12A)
15	124	126	122	123	166	134	174	192	174	174	201
18	76	84	81	91	75	92	69	73	85	59	48

**Film Submissions 1992 – 2002**



2002 also saw the establishment of a working party of BBFC and video industry representatives, to discuss the display of Consumer Advice on videos and DVDs. Commitments from the industry to increase coverage were bearing fruit by the end of the year, and further improvements are anticipated in 2003.



The Board expects that the existing public demand for Consumer Advice will grow as a result of increasing awareness, and we look forward to even more widespread display of Consumer Advice for both films and videos.

#### **Letters from the Public**

Considering the number of works which the BBFC classifies, we receive a relatively low number of complaints from the public about our decisions. Emails are these days the favoured form of contact though letters and telephone calls are still received from a wide range of individuals.

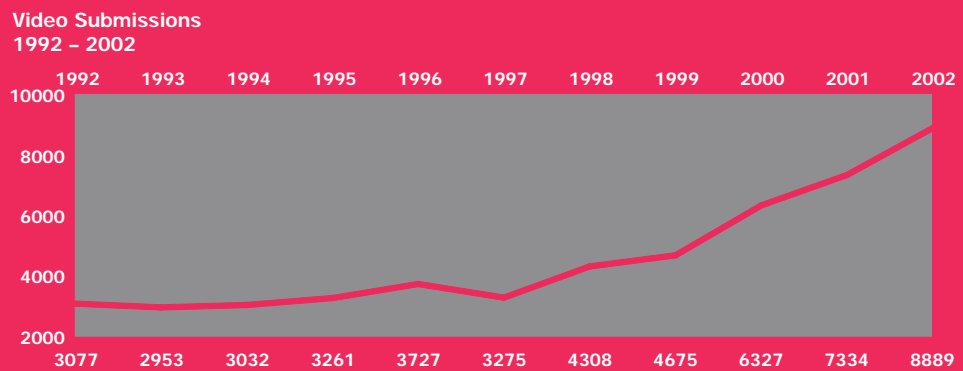
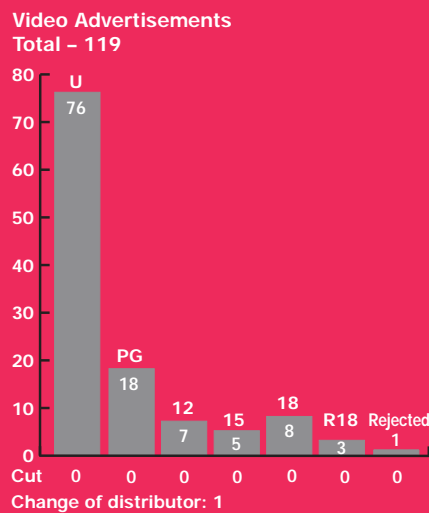
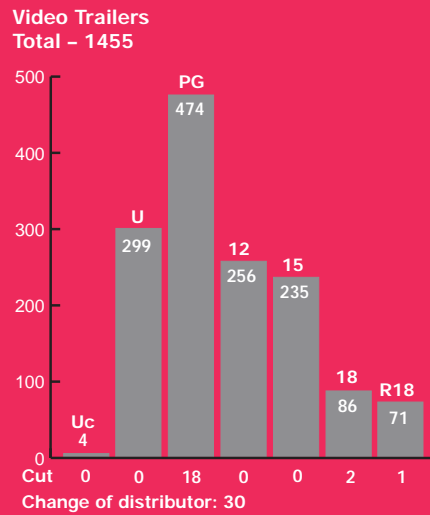
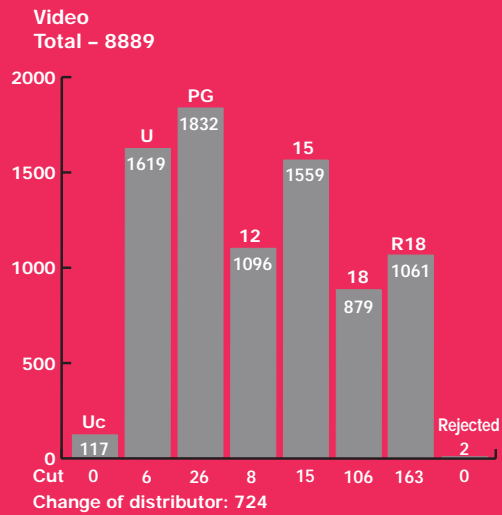
The introduction of the new film category '12A' at the end of August prompted a number of complaints including some from irate 12 year-olds who resented the fact that their younger siblings would not now have to wait before being able to see the latest James Bond film. Some adults objected also to their viewing being disturbed by under-12s.

Films which did come in for criticism because of their classification included *Minority Report*, which had been

given a '12' rating earlier in the year and which 29 people felt was too violent or disturbing for that age group. Purist adult fans of the *Star Wars* series objected to the Board requiring the removal of a head butt from *Episode II* to obtain a 'PG' rating. Nevertheless, one correspondent still thought the film too violent for 'PG'. Sixty-six people felt that the 'PG' rating for *The Lord of the Rings – The Fellowship of the Ring* was too low. These complaints were overwhelmingly from people who had not themselves taken children to see the film and so did not appear to be basing their concern on actual experience of children being upset by it. A few supportive letters were from grateful parents who had been able to take under-12s to see the film. Some alert correspondents contrasted the retention of a head butt by an evil orc in *Lord of the Rings* with the removal of a similar incident from *Star Wars*. The Board's concern in such cases is essentially to do with imitability. The younger the audience for the film, the more restrictive the Board is, but the context and strength of a particular action – as well as the attractiveness of the character perpetrating it – are all taken into account. Head butting by human role models will generally face stronger censure than the behaviour of fantastical creatures or cartoon characters.

Concerns about imitability prompted one correspondent to write in about Mel Gibson falling into a bath while clutching a hairdryer in *What Women Want*. The Board did indeed consider this point and noted also that the scene was pivotal to the plot. But the clear hazardousness of the situation and the fact that Mel Gibson's character actually said that this was a dangerous activity allowed the scene to remain. While the BBFC is concerned with the risk of any action in a film being copied, it is essential always to take the general context and effect into account. One parent wrote also to tell us that her four year-old had copied Mike, the green monster from *Monsters Inc.*, and sprayed hairspray into her own eyes. Fortunately, however, this seemed to be an isolated incident.





The Board's decision to give *Spider-man* a '12' rating brought in 51 letters - one of which was signed by a whole primary school class - objecting to the rating not being an unrestricted 'PG'. A number of correspondents subsequently wrote back to say that they had changed their minds either as a result of seeing the film or because they were persuaded by our arguments. It was unfortunate that *Spider-man* was released some weeks before the Board had completed the year-long research process leading to the new '12A'. When the change was made, the distributors reissued the film nationwide with a '12A' rating. Even so, under-12s were still not allowed to see the film unless an adult accompanied them.

Two films, *The Deep End* and *Mulholland Drive*, prompted complaints about the lack of warning of the homosexual content of the films. The Board does not make discriminatory distinctions between heterosexual and homosexual behaviour and it was pointed out to the correspondents that it would not have been appropriate to highlight the homosexual content of the film in the Consumer Advice more strongly than similar heterosexual content.

Two people were concerned by the title of the film, *Slap Her She's French*. They felt that it was xenophobic and promoted violence. Since it was clear that the film was a comedy, the Board felt that it would have been heavy handed to insist on a title change.

The BBFC receives regular correspondence about issues of offence. What is offensive to one person may of course be acceptable to another. Offence is an important issue in the lower categories, where the Board recognises public expectations in matters such as language or sexual explicitness. It is unlikely, however, to be an issue in films

rated '18' for adults. Here the issue is most commonly whether something is illegal or likely to be harmful to the potential audience. This means that some letters receive responses which will be unsatisfactory to the recipients. The Board tries to explain decisions clearly by setting them against the publicly tested Guidelines, but we accept that we will not always satisfy every correspondent.

### **Media Education**

The formal consultation with 15 to 18 year-old students began in 2001 and continued into 2002 with roadshows in Ramsgate, Farnborough, Pembroke, Dundee, London and Hartlepool. The students were shown clips from films which had been borderline decisions, covering violence, sex, horror and drugs, and they then put questions to a panel of examiners. In turn, the panel was able to elicit the reaction of the young people to the clips they had seen as well as their reactions to other classification decisions in the news. The 15 to 18 roadshow series has now ended and the resulting questionnaire returns will be analysed in 2003.

The day-to-day involvement of examiners in media education continued from previous years with numerous visits in 2002 to schools, colleges and universities. One examiner took part in a Young People's Parliament in Birmingham. Hundreds of young people also visited the Board for student seminars led by examiners. Adult education took the form of cinema workshops, seminars and presentations at film festivals, including the Edinburgh Festival. Examiners were interviewed for individual student research projects, as well as for TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and on-line websites. Of particular public interest in 2002 were the new '12A' category and the classification of films such as *The Lord of the Rings*, *Baise-Moi*, *Spider-man* and *Sweet Sixteen*.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets 'PG'



Most audiences addressed by the Board's examiners are in the 16 to 24 age group, which constitutes a significant part of cinema audiences. The Board receives rather fewer invitations to talk to 12 to 14 year-olds and is now actively seeking to consult this age group. In April 2002 the BBFC was pleased to be invited by the National Children's Bureau to organise a Saturday consultative session for 12 to 14 year-olds. After a presentation with film clips, the young people divided into small groups to talk to examiners about issues such as on-screen smoking and bad language. A clip from *The Others* prompted lively discussion of what makes a horror film frightening to this age group. The event provided useful pointers as to how more formal consultation with 12 to 14 year-olds might be carried out.

Each year examiners receive a number of invitations to meet children of primary school age. In 2002 the Board continued to obtain feedback from 'examiners' reports' written by junior school children on borderline 'U'/'PG' films such as *The Little Vampire*. One examiner took part in a Children's Film Unit workshop at Leavesden Studios. Filmmakers as young as nine were able to discover how their own work might be classified if it ever reached the BBFC.

Also during 2002 the Board began development of a website aimed at children of primary school age. Because of the language necessarily used in certain parts of the Board's main website, many schools which have any kind of 'net nanny' systems in place cannot access it. This is particularly true of primary schools. The new website, called cbbfc (children's BBFC), will use the latest in web design technology to create an exciting, interesting and safe site for younger film fans. It will include interactive competitions and the opportunity to be a BBFC examiner by classifying clips from the latest 'U' and 'PG' films. It is planned to launch cbbfc in June 2003.

The Board has continued to work with other organisations involved in media education. In July, examiners manned a BBFC 'stall' at the BFI Media Studies Conference on the South Bank in London. Teachers attending had the first opportunity to see the new BBFC educational wallchart for secondary schools and colleges. This uses captioned film and video stills to illustrate the types of decision made by the Board. The wallchart has proved popular, necessitating rapid reprinting. The BBFC has, for some years, worked closely with Film Education, a charity which supports the work of teachers in the study of the moving image. They offer a range of materials and events for both the primary and secondary sectors and are financed by the UK film industry. In October, examiners gave presentations round the country during National Schools Film Week. Ad hoc collaborations with Film Education included a Southampton seminar on 'Shocking Cinema'.



Among the Board's new initiatives is a project to contact certain groups whose views may not normally be heard. In December, two examiners visited the Southwark Asian Women's Association. Areas of concern included screen violence and the classification of Hindi swear words in Bollywood films. This initiative will continue into 2003.



### ***Information Technology***

All our major customers, and many smaller clients, now use the confidential BBFC Extranet to monitor the progress of their works, and therefore our performance, and to identify any problems quickly. Our IT function now serves significantly more external users than internal staff and 90 per cent of all submissions to the Board are monitored in this way.

The increase in demand for services through the Extranet led to a reduction in customer use of the public website, [www.bbfc.co.uk](http://www.bbfc.co.uk), during the first half of 2002. However, as the year progressed the number of other visitors increased and so the bandwidth capability was increased to cope accordingly. By the end of 2002 just under 1.5 million visits had been made to the main site. This averages out at three visitors to the site every minute of the year. Despite dramatically increasing our network connection capacity we will need to increase it again to support the constantly increasing volume of traffic.

The BBFC's corporate re-branding has now extended to the classification symbols themselves, which have been restyled in line with the Board's more up-to-date image. This change was made seamlessly on 31 December, taking advantage of the BBFC's policy of opening during the former Christmas break. The new '12A' category was likewise introduced without incident during the year.

The drive to improve efficiency by reducing the administrative burden for both customers and Board staff continued. We have completed the move from Windows based file-and-print services to systems run exclusively on our UNIX servers. This has improved the reliability of these services considerably – altogether there was only 15 minutes down time all year – whilst simultaneously reducing costs.

We have been looking carefully at options that will allow us to reduce our software costs over the medium term. We cannot realistically move our desktop operating systems away from Microsoft Windows yet, though we are testing alternatives for specialised functions. We have decided to move to the open source based StarOffice product. This provides us with all the office tools we need at a low price and avoids locking us in to any particular hardware or operating system.

The combination of increasing volumes of data and users together with consolidation of services will require a further investment in server hardware during 2003. Over the longer term this will be offset by the reduction in the total number of servers.

### ***Customer Helpline***

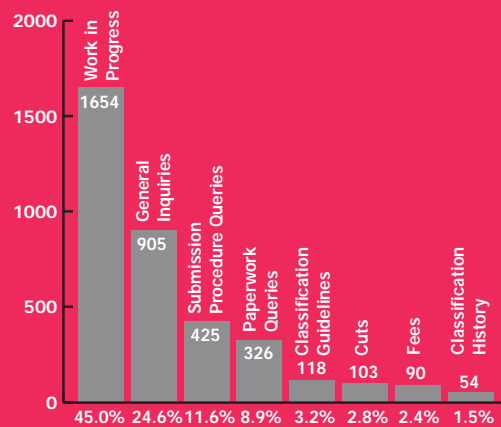
The customer helpline (020 7440 0299) is a highly valued service to the industry which provides answers and solutions to any questions that may be raised. Despite the high take-up of the Board's Extranet facility, helpline calls in 2002 were up by 35 per cent on 2001. This increase was not only related to the overall rise in submissions to the Board, but was also a direct result of the 376 new entrants on the Board's customer database.

To enhance the helpline service, calls are now logged electronically which makes it easier for the Board to analyse the call data and to respond to customer queries more efficiently.

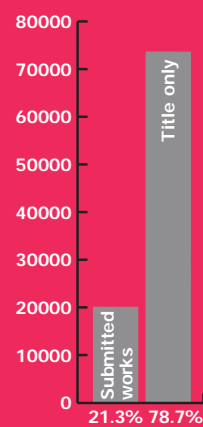
### ***Enforcement***

The Board continues to assist Trading Standards Officers and the Police with their responsibilities under the Video Recordings Act in relation to illegal videos, DVDs and digital media. Enforcement agencies can check with the

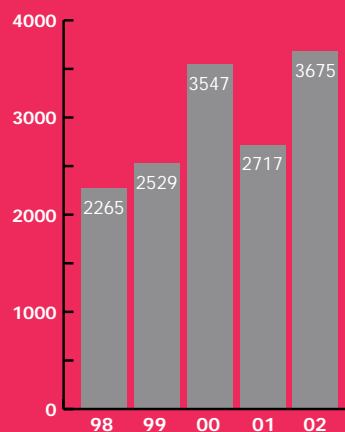
Helpline Call Types 2002  
Total 3675



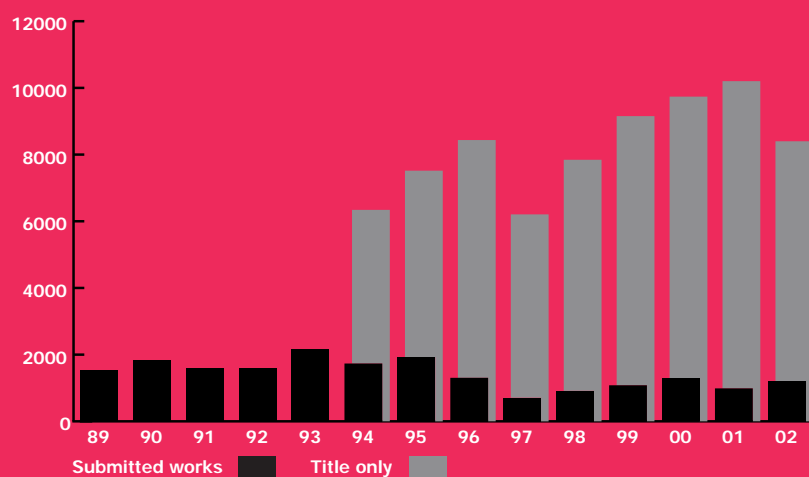
Works Requiring Evidence  
1989 – 2002



Number of Client Helpline Calls



Provision of Evidence  
Statistics 1989 – 2002





8 Femmes '15'  
Catch Me If You Can '12A'  
The Wild Thorneberrys 'U'

Board whether a seized video or DVD has been classified by the BBFC or whether it is the same as the version we have classified. Our evidence is therefore of prime importance in any subsequent legal proceedings. The Board dealt with nearly 10,000 queries in 2002. Items actually submitted for comparison totalled 1,325 and there were 8,357 title only enquiries. This constitutes a 30 per cent increase compared with works submitted in 2001 and a 15 per cent drop in title only submissions.

The total number of videos, DVDs, VCDs, laserdiscs and computer games submitted by Police and Trading Standards Officers since they were given the power under the Video Recordings Act to seize illegal materials in 1988 is 19,972. During the same period 73,737 titles have been checked.

### **Research**

The BBFC has an ongoing commitment to monitor research carried out by other bodies, as well as initiating our own research. We are particularly concerned about matters such as public opinion on classification issues including sex, violence and language, different public attitudes to particular film genres, and possible media effects.

#### ***Where do you draw the line?***

Late in 2001, the BBFC commissioned Dr Guy Cumberbatch of the Communications Research Group to carry out research into the attitudes and reactions of video renters to sexual violence. The study was conducted in several stages. A survey of video renters across the Midlands looked at attitudes to regulation and views on the right of adults to see graphic material on video. A cross-section of those renters was then selected to form a viewing panel which watched a number of uncut videos which included sexual violence. Follow-up telephone interviews probed opinions and feelings about the works. Finally, two focus groups derived from the viewing panel met to discuss if, why and how such videos should be regulated.

The survey was carried out in 15 video outlets and involved 277 respondents. Just over half of respondents believed that video regulation was about right. Amongst the minority who disagreed, those who felt that there was too much regulation outnumbered those who thought there was too little by four to one. There was a similar result when respondents were asked specifically about '18' rated videos: 58 per cent believed regulation of sex was 'about right'; 49 per cent took the same view in relation to violence and 52 per cent for sexual violence. Amongst the dissenters, the more liberal views outweighed the more restrictive for sex (by four to one) and violence (by two to one). However, when it came to sexual violence, the ratio dropped to almost one to one. This more restrictive attitude to sexual violence was also apparent when respondents were asked whether people over 18 had a right to see graphic sexual violence. Only 38 per cent said yes. This compared with 74 per cent who believed people over 18 had a right to see violence and 67 per cent who took the same view about real sex.



Men were more liberal in their attitudes to regulation and older people were more conservative. The most liberal minded were heavy video renters and those with an interest in fantasy films, particularly horror. However, educational level, newspaper readership type, having children at home and hours of television watched per week were less significant variables.



This information was then used to select a cross-section of 25 male and 25 female video renters to form a viewing panel. Each member was asked to watch, on their own, three *uncut* videos selected from six titles containing sexual violence: *Baise-Moi*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Death Wish II*, *I Spit on Your Grave*, *The Last House on the Left* and *Straw Dogs*. Each participant was interviewed prior to receiving the videos to ensure there would be no personal difficulties, and interviewed in depth by professional counsellors after watching them.

Sexual violence on screen could be accepted by both conservative and liberal-minded people, provided it was justified in the storyline and was 'in context'. If a film was perceived to have little merit or justifying narrative, even liberal-minded participants recommended not releasing the films uncut. As in the wider survey findings, gender was a clear discriminator: almost seven out of ten recommendations by men were to release the films uncut compared with only four out of ten recommendations by women.

In interviews, and particularly in the focus groups, concern about what types of people would actually *want* to watch some of the videos was common. This raised a dilemma for participants. On the one hand, advertising the work's content might attract the 'wrong audience'; on the other, respondents expressed the 'need to know' when the content was 'different or worse' than the average film with an '18' certificate.

Attitude measures taken before and after watching the films showed shifts towards less liberal views, especially a stronger belief that 'it is very important to protect young people from seeing '18' certificated films.' From the BBFC's point of view, the most significant single outcome

of this research is the evidence of the public unacceptability of graphic sexual violence. This is particularly notable given the fact that video renters tend to be more liberal than the wider public. The full version of this report is available on the BBFC website.

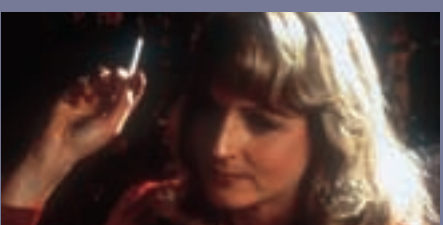
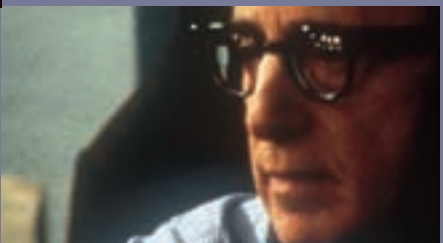
### *Under-18 viewing habits*

One emphasis of the research undertaken during the year has been to obtain a better understanding of the viewing behaviour and attitudes of people under 18. For the first time, the Board has been able to commission research which tracks the viewing habits of audiences – cinema-goers, buyers and viewers of video, DVD and Pay Per View material. The quantitative research, conducted by Taylor Nelson Sofres, involves an extensive panel of 15,000 respondents logging all the films, videos, DVDs and Pay Per View movies they have watched, purchased for themselves or bought as gifts. Demographically and regionally representative, the core panel ranges in age from six to 74 and is supplemented by a panel of 1,000 heavy film consumers aged 16 to 34. The self-reported data is collected fortnightly by telephone interviews with participants. The research concentrates on the viewing and purchasing behaviour, by gender and different age bands, of under-18s, particularly their access to material classified '12', '15' and '18'. Initial results have proved interesting and the Board hopes to develop the research in the coming year.

### *Should the '12' rating become advisory?*

The introduction of the new '12A' rating for cinemas at the end of August was preceded by a year-long programme of research. This has been briefly summarised earlier in this **Annual Report** in the section **New Film Category Introduced**.

The Curse of the Jade Scorpion '12A'  
Talk To Her '15'  
Goldmember '12'





Following on from the pilot of the new category in Norwich late in 2001, a national survey in 2002 tested the acceptability of an advisory '12' rating with 4,000 respondents. To ensure that there was a direct correlation with the results from the Norwich pilot, respondents were asked almost identical questions about the introduction of an advisory '12' rating. Did they think that the '12' rating should become advisory without any conditions? Only 37 per cent of respondents said yes. Those who said no were then asked if they would change their minds given the choice of three options: that there should be more information about the content of films (levels of strong language, sex, and violence etc.); that children under 12 had to be accompanied by an adult; or that there should be more information about the content of the film AND that children under 12 had to be accompanied by an adult. When these conditions were taken into account the national survey figure in favour of an advisory '12' rating rose to just over 70 per cent. This very closely mirrored the earlier Norwich findings.

Significantly, when households with children were considered on their own, the figure in favour of an advisory rating rose to 75 per cent. Again, this was on condition that there was more information available about the content of the film and that under-12s were accompanied by an adult. The questionnaire also asked whether the adult accompanying the child had to be a parent or could be any responsible adult. The results were slightly in favour of parents accompanying children at 64 per cent, but 59 per cent felt that a responsible adult was appropriate. No doubt respondents did not wish to prevent aunts, uncles, grandparents, teachers etc., from taking children to the cinema. With this in mind the final decision was that accompaniment should be by a responsible adult over the age of 18.





classification30

## Children

A key aim of the BBFC is to ensure that younger and more vulnerable members of society are protected from harm. Many of the decisions described in other sections of this Report result from the Board's particular concern about children. The Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing is a valuable source of ongoing advice about children's issues but, as in previous years, the Board also found it necessary occasionally to obtain specialist advice from outside.

One piece of legislation the Board has to take account of is the Protection of Children Act 1978 which makes it an offence to produce or publish indecent images of a child under sixteen. The BBFC cannot certify material which contravenes the Act. Early in the year, *The Ages of Lulu*, a Spanish subtitled work exploring sexual obsession and the sexual awakening of a young woman, raised such an issue. The opening shot showed a baby girl lying on her back with her genital area exposed to the camera. The Board consulted the Paedophile Unit of the Metropolitan Police who advised that a court would be likely to find the image indecent. A cut was accordingly made. The Unit also advised that the image might be of particular interest to a paedophile.

Paedophilia is an issue of current and serious public concern. The BBFC's duty is to base its judgements on the most objective and professional advice available. In 2001 the Board had taken legal advice about the final scene in the French subtitled film *A Ma Soeur!* where a young girl is raped. A leading QC had advised the Board that the scene did not contravene the Protection of Children Act, even though the actress had been under sixteen at the time the film was made. In 2002 the feature was submitted for video classification. On video, the Board had also to take account of the less controlled, domestic context within which the work might be viewed. Clinical psychologists advised the Board that the rape scene might be used in such a context to groom a young victim. While

an '18' rating for *cinema* would prevent an abusive adult taking in a child, a video could be used in a one-to-one situation with a child to validate abusive behaviour. The rape scene was therefore cut for video.



In March the Board had to classify on video a controversial episode of the television programme, *Brass Eye*, which dealt with paedophilia. This had attracted complaints when shown on television, and some viewers felt the issue was inappropriate for satirical treatment. The Board judged that the material was unlikely to be used by paedophiles but classified the episode in the '18' category for the adult theme and the potential for offence.

Similar considerations arose when the film *L.I.E* was submitted to the Board. It featured a 15 year-old boy in a relationship with a much older man. The film raised no legal issues and the treatment of the theme was sufficiently discreet not to require BBFC intervention. It was given an '18' rating. A manga animation called *Burn-Up Excess* also gave rise to concern. The cartoon had clear appeal to children and young adolescents and yet it contained a comic scene in which a father groped his daughter's breasts. The Paedophile Unit advised that the video did not contravene any legislation but the Board concluded that even a light-hearted take on abusive behaviour was inappropriate below '15'.



I Spy '12A'  
Spider-man '12A'  
Scooby Doo 'PG'

Examiners are regularly required to consider the abusive potential of material and they need to be aware of all relevant issues. In April they attended a presentation by an officer from the Paedophile Unit of the Metropolitan Police and a specialist who works with sex offenders. Examiners were informed about the type of material which exists and the way in which the 'grooming' process works.

### Violence

Violence on screen continues to generate concern, particularly in works aimed at younger audiences. The BBFC's response is to monitor public opinion and the possibility of harm and to classify violence with due regard to tone, detail and context, maintaining particular care in the junior categories. Problems are dealt with by cutting either to achieve specific categories or where breaches of the law occur.

During the year a number of high-profile films, likely to attract substantial child audiences, offered mild-to-moderate violence in a variety of forms: slapstick, fantasy, historical and action. The use of martial arts and combat techniques in fight sequences is always a source of potential problems. The spin-off film from the popular children's animation series *Scooby-Doo* followed the dog of the title and his human companions through adventures in a theme park. Sight of the heroine, Daphne, kicking a wrestler in the head was beyond the level acceptable for 'PG' and was cut for that category.

Head butts were removed from the children's adventure sequel *Spy Kids 2* to obtain a 'U', and from the comedy *Master of Disguise* to obtain a 'PG'. At the '12'/'12A' category, the Bond-style action adventure *XXX* also required the removal of a particularly vicious head butt, this time administered by the hero. The Board takes care that such combat techniques do not feature in films in the junior categories in contexts that invite imitation.

The latest James Bond film, *Die Another Day*, featuring

secret agent 007 confronting the usual impressive array of villains, fantastical gadgets and weaponry, also received a '12A' certificate, which was consistent with the '12' categories awarded for previous Bond films. Its rating was due to some moderate, but not graphic, action violence and an impressionistic and visually discreet sex scene (the first of its kind for James Bond).

The Eddie Murphy comedy *I Spy*, based on the cult television series which starred Bill Cosby and Robert Culp, presented a moment of uncharacteristic sadism in which a woman character stabs a man in the leg, with evident pleasure, followed by a shot of the blade being withdrawn. This kind of focus on detail, especially with the aggravating element of pleasure expressed by the assailant, breached the Guidelines for '12A' and resulted in a cut.

Advance publicity and marketing can create an expectation that a film will get a particular rating, as was the case with *Spider-man*. The vigorous marketing of *Spider-man* merchandise deliberately targeted young children, and the pre-publicity strongly suggested that this was going to be a children's film. However, the Marvel comic hero dealt out punishment in the film in a style that made a 'PG' rating (which does not require adult accompaniment) impossible and at times challenged the '12' Guidelines for violence. Many children who had collected the associated *Spider-man* toys were inevitably disappointed when the film was released at '12', but the BBFC was in no doubt that the quality of the personal violence and the retribution theme placed the film towards the top of the '12' category, where it was contained by the fantasy context and its clear moral intentions. The BBFC resisted unusually strong commercial pressure and the pleas of many disappointed children, maintaining the integrity of the Guidelines by placing the film at '12'. However, around five per cent of local authorities bowed to public protests and overturned the BBFC's '12' category, as is their right, in favour of a local 'PG' or (more sensibly) a requirement that under-12s be accompanied.





Another high-profile film that offered '12' strength violence was Spielberg's sci-fi thriller *Minority Report*. In this futuristic tale of a society where crimes can be predicted before their commission, the violence was not especially graphic and lacked details of injury. This was also the case with the thriller *The Bourne Identity*, the first film to be rated '12A'. Both films relied on suspense and action to generate their excitement rather than violence.

Violence in video material requires particular vigilance because of the possibility of under-age viewing in the home. A number of features mixing physical with sexual violence required cuts on both grounds. *The House on the Edge of the Park*, a 1980s 'video nasty', had previously been successfully prosecuted under the Obscene Publications Act and had been refused classification on film in 1981. 2002 saw the submission of an uncut version from which sight of a man having his head brutally and repeatedly slammed on a table had to be removed (along with several sexually violent moments) to obtain an '18' rating.

Another scene of graphic violence required cuts to a video of the 1976 Greek film *Island of Death*. Shots of a woman being blasted in the face with an ignited aerosol, with subsequent sight of her blistered face, were removed before this could be passed at '18'.

Sadism was also the issue in the Japanese video *Fudoh – The New Generation*, a Yakuza drama directed by Takashi Miike. The severe beating of a female assassin by her rival male counterpart was exacerbated by elements of humiliation that exceeded '18' Guidelines. From the same director came the '18' rated film *Ichii the Killer*, a study of a tormented young man being manipulated by a sadistic killer for his own ends. In addition to several scenes of gross sexual violence, the film featured a sequence where a woman was beaten to death after a horrific sexual assault. As a consequence, the BBFC required the most substantial cuts to an '18' rated cinema film since 1994.

One of the most difficult films of the year was Gaspar Noé's drama *Irreversible*, which reversed chronological progression, presenting an act of gross violence with no apparent context, and then moving back in time to provide the motivation for the violent attack. The brutal assault in a gay club involved a man's head being repeatedly struck with a fire extinguisher. The sequence was genuinely shocking, placed as it was near the start of the film and appearing at first without narrative justification. It was not until later in the film that it became apparent that the attack was motivated by the brutal rape of a woman. The attack offered no pleasures, while illustrating the ugliness and ultimate futility of extreme physical aggression. The decision was finally taken, after much consideration, to allow the film to remain uncut at '18'. Further comment about *Ichii the Killer* and *Irreversible* may be found in the section under **Sexual Violence**.

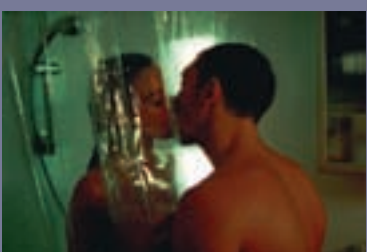
### Fantasy and Horror

Once again fantasy films proved popular with all ages, with 'horror' more common in the higher categories.

Ich: The Killer '18'

Irreversible '18'

The Bourne Identity '12A'





The Time Machine 'PG'  
 Panic Room '15'  
 The Lord of the Rings - The Two Towers '12A'  
 Minority Report '12'

At 'PG', where works should not contain material that might disturb children over eight years old, remakes, spin-offs of television series and sequels proved extremely popular throughout the year. A feature-length spin-off of a popular contemporary children's cartoon series, *The Powerpuff Girls* – about a trio of crime-fighting young girls with special powers – featured more sustained mild fantasy violence and peril than would be found in the shorter self-contained episodes. The addition of a pounding musical soundtrack resulted in a cautionary 'PG' rating for a film which could prove intense or overwhelming for younger children.

In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, the second so far in the series, the occasional mild bad language and horror would be familiar and unlikely to disturb the majority of younger audience members. However, some particularly scary scenes involving the children being chased by giant spiders, meant that the Board's Consumer Advice alerted parents to the presence of 'fantasy spiders'.

A new film version of H.G. Wells' science-fiction tale, *The Time Machine*, in which a 19th century scientist is transported several thousand years into the future, contained some moderately frightening and extended scenes of fantasy horror and violence. However, it was clear that this would be enjoyed by most children over eight and that these scenes would not prove difficult for the great majority of them. Again, the Board ensured that all publicity and advertising prominently displayed Consumer Advice – in this case stating that 'Scary scenes may not be suitable for under-8s'.

At '12' on film ('12A' after 30th August 2002), sequels and spin-offs from other media were also popular. *Spider-man*, the live-action spin-off from the Marvel comic series, proved to be one of the most popular films of the summer.

However, the film makers' decision to portray the film's occasional scenes of good versus evil fantasy violence in a strong and realistic fashion meant that the Board could not reconcile these scenes with the 'PG' Guidelines. The issues are covered in more detail in the section in the Report on **Violence**.

*The Scorpion King*, the prequel to *The Mummy* film series, was less a horror film than an action-adventure work which starred the popular US wrestling star, The Rock. Although made with older children in mind and lacking in stronger violence, the crunching sound effects which accompanied the frequent fight scenes and some moderate violence meant that this was still appropriately contained at the '12' category, the same rating as the other two films in the series.

The eagerly awaited sequel *The Lord of the Rings – The Two Towers*, the second film in the Tolkien trilogy, proved to be a darker and more threatening work than its 'PG' rated predecessor. The intense combat and fantasy horror scenes were also more prolonged and potentially overwhelming for younger viewers. The Board concluded that overall this was a different and stronger experience than its 'PG' rated predecessor and it was passed '12A' uncut.

The somewhat bleak tone and mature theme of Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* was offset by state-of-the-art computer-generated effects and action set pieces that would be enjoyed by most adolescent viewers. The film's more grown-up themes and issues were also responsibly and discreetly handled in a manner that made the film appropriate at '12A'.

An American high school was the setting for the teen-movie *Swimfan*, in which an obsessive girl stalks a male student and his girlfriend. The lack of detailed violence or horror made the treatment of this suspense thriller acceptable at '12A'.



Two '15' rated British horror films, made over thirty years ago, *The Curse of Frankenstein* and *The Horror of Frankenstein*, came in for reclassification in 2002. The horror and violence was now sufficiently dated to pass them '12' uncut for video. The rather stronger modern British werewolf film *Dog Soldiers* did not dwell on the details of pain and injury, and was acceptable at '15'. Soldiers again confronted reawakened supernatural entities in the British horror films, *Deathwatch* and *The Bunker*. In both instances the horror and violence was obscured by their dark and gloomy settings and they received a '15' rating. The Hannibal Lecter remake *Red Dragon* emphasised suspense rather than violent or horrific detail and also received a '15'. Similar considerations permitted a '15' for *Jason X*, the tenth film in the *Friday the 13th* series, and *Halloween Resurrection*, the eighth film in this particular series.

By contrast, the Japanese animated science-fiction work *Akira*, previously passed '12' on film in 1990, was uprated to '15' for the cinema as the levels of strong violence, language and sexual violence were no longer defensible at a lower level under the current Guidelines.

Some horror works classified '18' or 'X' up to 30 years previously were resubmitted. The dated nature of the effects and diminished impact allowed the Board to reduce the following films to a '15': *Twins of Evil*, *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb*, *Scars of Dracula*, *The Wicker Man*, *Piranha*, *Jason Lives – Friday the 13th Part VI* and *The Exorcist III*. Amongst other ageing videos previously cut or banned, *Tenebrae*, *The Burning*, *The Driller Killer* and *The Evil Dead* were resubmitted and passed '18' uncut.

At '18' there are no constraints on horror, and it is usually the strength of the violence and the level of bad language which tips the film into that category. *28 Days Later...*, a British film about a group of plague virus survivors, was given an '18' because of the very strong and aggressively



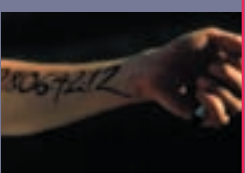
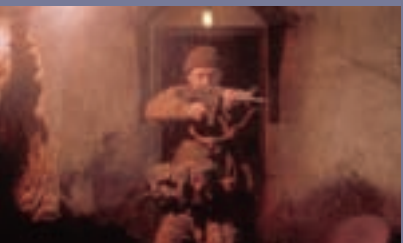
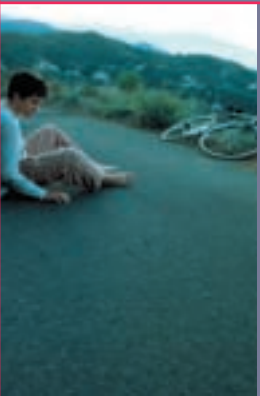
delivered language and detailed personalised violence. *My Little Eye* contained a scene of suffocation which dwelt on the victim's pain and suffering in a manner which precluded any category below '18'. The '18' rated vampire movie sequel *Blade II* contained detailed and bloody personalised violence in a series of brutal fight scenes. Particularly bloody violence produced an '18' rating for the French psychological horror film *Trouble Every Day*.

### Imitable Techniques

A specific area of concern for the BBFC is the possibility that young and susceptible viewers might be persuaded to copy dangerous activities seen on the screen, with harmful results. If those activities have the added spice of glamour, or are performed by role models, the risk of copycat behaviour becomes greater. Such activities, or 'imitable techniques', may have to be removed altogether, especially in the junior categories, or at least placed safely in a category where the risks are substantially diminished.

The range of techniques is wide and unpredictable. Most common are dangerous combat techniques like head butts and double ear-claps. These are considered in context and examined for the level of instructive detail they provide, the kind of pleasures that they offer and the realistic likelihood of their being copied, especially by children in their play.

Trouble Every Day '18'  
Dog Soldiers '15'  
Donnie Darko '15'



The fairly weighty head butt delivered by the armoured Jango to the vulnerable Obi Wan in *Star Wars Episode II – Attack of the Clones* was removed for a 'PG', given the obvious attraction of the film to very young audiences who might attempt to replicate the move seen on screen. An animated children's video, *The Secret World of Santa Claus – Havoc In Toyland*, contained the sight of Santa punishing the villain with a smartly delivered double ear-clap. This possibly innocuous-looking, but very dangerous, combat technique was removed for a 'U'.

Misuse of electricity also presents dangers to the young, so the sight of a child stripping away the insulation from a cable to expose the bare wire was cut from a 'U' rated video feature, *Pets*. Of equal concern are features that present images of hangings that suggest that the victim can dangle at a rope's end for a considerable period, with no particular or lasting ill-effects. On these grounds a cut was made to the 'PG' film *The Count of Monte Cristo* and also to the '12' rated *The Abduction Club*.

The dangers of children climbing into kitchen electrical equipment, typically fridges and laundry machines, are self-evident to all but the very young. Any children's film that presents this scenario is likely to be a candidate for cuts. The animated feature *Lilo & Stitch* contained a scene where the heroine, being chased by her sister, clambers into a tumble-drier to hide. No mention is made of the dangers of this act when she is discovered, and the Board requested a cut to remove the unacceptable footage for 'U'. The Disney company, once alerted to the dangers that the scene presented for the young, chose to re-shoot so that audiences now see Lilo hiding in a harmless cupboard. The newly-created safe version of the incident was incorporated into all prints of the finished work, and the potential harm was averted.

Although BBFC concerns about imitation most often centre on younger children, the depiction of dangerous, illegal or antisocial acts in material aimed at teenagers can also pose problems. In particular the BBFC must be constantly aware of the possibilities of under-age viewing of video material, and classify it accordingly, or if necessary make cuts under the provisions of the Video Recordings Act. The video *Slipknot – Generation Z*, an unofficial documentary about the Iowa nu-metal band of the title, was likely to attract a substantial mid-teen audience. In one scene, a group of youths in a car are seen cruising the streets in what appears to be actual rather than orchestrated footage. The young men mount a series of random attacks with a selection of missiles on cars, pedestrians and cyclists, and seem to take great pleasure in doing so. While this display of antisocial behaviour might be in keeping with the reputation the band have tried to construct for themselves, the footage was cut to avoid the possibility of impressionable young fans copying what is presented as 'cool' behaviour in this '15' rated video.

The current vogue for reality television has been reflected in video and film submissions that have presented the Board with a new set of challenges. *Jackass – The Movie*, a spin-off from a popular television series, consisted of a stream of crazy, destructive, messy and sometimes dangerous stunts performed by adults for their entertainment value. One stunt, involving lighting a container full of fireworks, gave rise to some concern, and the Board secured an undertaking from the distributor that the film's release would not coincide with the easy availability of fireworks in the shops. It was nonetheless rated '18' with the Consumer Advice that it 'Contains dangerous and crude stunts'.

Jackass - The Movie '18'

Ma Femme est une Actrice '15'  
Lilo and Stitch 'U'







Jackass - The Movie '18'

Similar material and problems were present in *Steve-O – Don't Try This At Home*. This video also contains scenes involving fireworks, including one where Steve-O appears in a jacket to which lighted firecrackers are attached. He survives unscathed, which suggests that such misuse of fireworks does not present much risk. Both this stunt, and another in which Steve-O is intravenously injected with vodka, were removed for '18' under the terms of the Video Recordings Act, given the risks of under-age viewing.

*You Gotta See This! Too Hot For Fox* was another piece of video entertainment for adults. This time the theme was extreme sports activity, with particular focus on injuries sustained during kick-boxing, skate-boarding and other pursuits. The tone was sensational rather than serious, and the sight of horrific injuries, exacerbated by multiple repetitions, served simply to promote an attitude of callous enjoyment of suffering. The problem was resolved by removing the repetitions so that audiences lost nothing of the narrative, but were not invited to revel in the suffering.

*Getaway in Stockholm* was another reality video which came under scrutiny for its content – footage of cars driving very fast through city streets, jumping red lights,

sometimes with police in pursuit. Concerns about encouraging irresponsible motoring were addressed by advice obtained from the Police Road Traffic Safety Unit, who judged the video to be safe at '15'.

The BBFC, however, was unable to pass the video *Hooligans* at any level. It consisted of a collection of graphic scenes of football violence from various sources, accompanied by a pulsing soundtrack. While the subject of soccer hooliganism is entirely legitimate in a documentary, the treatment here was exploitative, lacking any critical or explanatory balance and presenting violence on and off the pitch as exciting. The Board judged it likely to encourage potential hooligans and might also validate the violent and antisocial behaviour of confirmed football hooligans. An aggravating feature was a degree of racism which became apparent from time to time. The BBFC felt that under the provisions of the Video Recordings Act the work should be rejected.

### Drugs

The illegal use of drugs continued to be of concern to the public and media in 2002, as well as to the BBFC. Works submitted to the Board which included drug use were given particular attention.



*Tape*, a film starring Ethan Hawke and Uma Thurman, explored questions of truth and morality against the backdrop of date rape. Hawke's character was seen to snort cocaine and the possibility that the scene could have the effect of legitimising the drug was considered. After very careful consideration the Board felt that the negative aspects of the action were sufficiently clear for the film to be released at '15'. Similarly, the satirical Chris Morris series *Brass Eye* was carefully considered for video release and it was finally decided that an episode showing drugs use in a highly ironic context could be contained at '15'. The thriller *The Salton Sea* contained dialogue descriptions of drugs manufacture, but it was decided that this posed no problems on film for an adult audience. The resubmissions, in their uncut form, of *Panic in Needle Park* and *Trainspotting* were both passed '18' uncut, but not before the Board sought advice from experts in the psychiatric and drugs treatment fields. *City By The Sea*, starring Robert De Niro, contained a strongly anti-drugs message and was acceptable at '15' for cinema classification. However, expert advice was sought on the video submission of *City by the Sea* and it was unusually raised to '18' for the video release because of concerns that one scene in particular, viewed repeatedly at home, could provide instructive details about drug use.

Two documentaries, *Grass* and *Green Britain*, attempted to show the futility (as the film makers perceived it) of the attempts, past and present, to prohibit cannabis use. After some deliberation it was felt that both works contained a serious and balanced intent and were, therefore, a legitimate contribution to the ongoing political debate.

There was a minor landmark near the end of the year when the Roger Corman work *The Trip* was finally granted a

video certificate at '18' after 35 years. The Board concluded that its portrayal of the hallucinogenic experience was unlikely to convince a modern viewer and took account also of the film's depiction of the downside as well as the pleasure of drug use.

In 2002 the Board continued to gather information from experts in the field and to keep in touch with the perceptions of younger people through visits to schools and colleges. The Schools Liaison Officer of the Metropolitan Police continued to be a useful and informative contact.

### Animals

Amongst the legislation the Board must take into account is the Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937. This prohibits the public exhibition of a film containing a scene which was organised or directed in such a way as to involve the cruel infliction of pain or terror on any animal or the cruel goading of any animal to fury. The BBFC applies this legal test to all films and videos submitted for classification. Films made in the USA or the UK which involve animal action are often supervised by animal welfare organisations or veterinary specialists to ensure the good treatment of the animal concerned.

Although most film makers have a very responsible attitude to animal welfare, the Board has no option but to require cuts whenever a scene fails the legal test. During 2002, 17 videos were cut on the grounds of real animal cruelty, apparently organised or directed by the film maker. This figure is not significantly different from 2001 and once again nearly all the cuts were to works made some years ago, often in countries where concern for this issue has been less pronounced.



Once Upon a Time in the Midlands '15'  
My Big Fat Greek Wedding 'PG'  
24 Hour Party People '18'





Some of the video works resubmitted in 2002 were very old indeed. Two Tarzan films (*Tarzan and his Mate* and *Tarzan Escapes*), made in the 1930's and starring Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan, had to be cut to remove scenes featuring big cats being tripped by wires as they ran. A new, slightly extended version of Tony Richardson's 1963 film *Tom Jones*, starring Albert Finney, was submitted for classification but included scenes of cockfighting which had been cut previously on both film and video. The cuts had to be made once again. Other examples of real animal cruelty cut from videos during 2002 included dangerous horse falls, live chickens being used as bait for Alsatian dogs, a rabbit being swung around by its ears, a monkey hit by a blow-pipe dart, and a live deer with an arrow in its side.



The BBFC is aware that the modern film maker can employ a variety of sophisticated techniques and training methods in order to create the impression of cruelty without ever subjecting an animal to any real harm or suffering. Consequently, the first response to the discovery of a potentially problematic scene is to investigate the circumstances of filming. If the scene was not supervised by a reputable body such as the American Humane Association (AHA) or the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) then the company will be

asked to explain how the scene was filmed. Explanations are then set against evidence from the film itself and any other relevant sources. Advice from veterinary and legal experts is sought whenever there is any doubt.

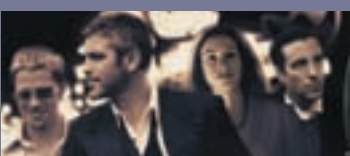
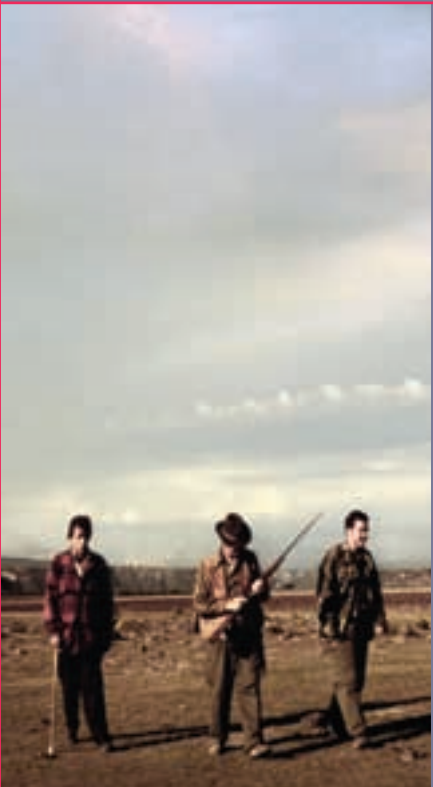
During the year, the Board went to considerable lengths, though with varying results, to ascertain the methods used to create apparently problematic scenes in three serious and well regarded cinema films. The award winning Spanish film *Hable Con Ella - Talk To Her* featured scenes of bullfighting. Providing these were events existing independently of the film and the film makers, there would be no breach of the Act. However, in two scenes the lead actress was herself apparently engaged in staged bullfights, with shots showing the bull with bloody wounds from the pics stuck in its flesh. With some difficulty, the BBFC was able to extract from the producers clear and convincing evidence that the director, Pedro Almodovar, had in fact filmed a real bullfight, which would have taken place regardless of the presence of the cameras, and digitally superimposed the image of the actress over the image of the bullfighter. The film was finally passed '15' uncut.

John Malkovich's directorial debut *The Dancer Upstairs*, a drama loosely based on the activities of the Peruvian terrorist group Shining Path, showed how the bombers used animals to assist them in planting explosives. A montage sequence included shots of a dog and a chicken with dynamite and a lit fuse apparently attached to, respectively, tail and leg. Although neither animal looked particularly distressed, the sequence raised concerns about the proximity of the animals to the burning fuses. The production company was able to provide detailed and convincing assurances that the fuses were, in fact, specially designed to spark at low temperatures and that both animals were treated with appropriate care both before and during filming. The film was passed '15' uncut.





Ocean's Eleven '12'  
Japon '18'  
City Of God '18'



South American cinema is currently producing significant numbers of UK 'art house' hits, but one film will be playing in a cut form as a result of BBFC intervention to prevent it from breaking the law on animal cruelty in films. *Japon*, a Mexican drama concerning a man who retreats into the countryside to consider his life and future, features two scenes in which animals appeared to have been cruelly treated. In the first, a bird flaps in an agitated fashion as its neck is squeezed by a small boy in a failed attempt to kill it. In the second, a puppy is encouraged to 'sing' by a man who is clearly pressing his fingers into the dog's chest. Although the production company suggested that both animals had been responding to non-painful stimuli, the BBFC took expert veterinary advice which established that this was inconsistent with the on-screen evidence and that the animals must, in fact, have been subjected to cruelty. The relevant shots were cut before a certificate was awarded to the film.

*The Isle*, which came in to the BBFC during 2001 and which was judged then to fall foul of the Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act, was scheduled to play at several film festivals around the country in its uncut version during 2002. The BBFC notes that the RSPCA informed the local authorities in the relevant areas that the film was illegal and the screenings were cancelled.

### Language

The Board continues to be sensitive to the public's views about strong language. Since the introduction of the current Guidelines, the Board no longer relies upon a list of swear words simply rated by offence, but instead takes into account the strength, context and tone of the words used. The Board takes care to ensure that language does not exceed audience expectations at any category. More offensive terms are removed from junior categories, while the strongest sexual expletives are restricted to the upper categories and, where used aggressively, to '18'.

Language was not a major feature of classification in 2002, although a number of issues of interest arose in the year. At the junior level, two uses of 'wanker' were removed from *The Crocodile Hunter – Collision Course* in order to secure the film a 'PG' where its natural audience lay. A subtitled use of 'motherfucker' was cut from the Spanish video *Carmen*, to bring it in line with a previous 'PG' version.

In the US the desire of distributors to obtain the financially lucrative 'PG-13' rating sometimes results in the inclusion of a single gratuitous expletive, usually 'fuck'. This has a knock on effect for the BBFC as it means that some films have to be given '12A' ratings because of the language when the rest of the film is clearly no stronger than 'PG'. A recent example of this was the remake of the 'Rat Pack' movie *Ocean's Eleven*, starring George Clooney and Brad Pitt. It continues to be the case that the British public generally will not accept 'fuck' at all at 'U' or 'PG' and do not expect it to be frequent at levels below '15'.

At the upper end of classification, two British films were notable for their very strong language. Mike Leigh's *All or Nothing* included eight uses of 'cunt', some angry and threatening, raising the work from its requested '15' to '18'. Ken Loach's *Sweet Sixteen*, about a Glaswegian 15 year-old's attempts to keep his mother away from her abusive boyfriend after her release from prison, included around 20 uses of the same expletive, including several very aggressive uses. The film's director maintained that the naturalistic dialogue would be familiar to 15 year-olds for whom he felt the film had particular appeal. In exchanges with the distributor and director, the Board explained that the frequency and tone of the language could neither be accommodated nor defended at '15' under its commitments to the public (and the rest of the film industry) in the Board's Guidelines. The '18' certificate awarded to the film was supported by local councils to whom appeals were made, with only two councils awarding a '15'.



Extra items added to DVDs, for example interviews with the cast and crew, directors' commentaries and 'making of' or production documentaries, occasionally presented language out of character with the featured film or television series. A clear mouthed use of 'fuck' was removed from a DVD extra for *Men in Black II* to make it suitable for the audience of the 'PG' rated film, while two uses of the same word by an actor fluffing his lines were cut from a behind-the-scenes look at *Doctor Who – The Aztecs DVD – Restoring the Aztecs* to match the 'U' rated feature episodes of the long-established sci-fi series.



Strong language also proved to be a more significant feature of South Asian films in 2002. Two films *Kaante* and *Shakthi – The Power* were both rated '15' for strong language in Hindi. The Board is considering a research project on the swearing found in South Asian films to gauge its level of offence amongst speakers of languages from the Indian subcontinent in the UK. As ever, it is essential that policy keeps pace with audience expectations.

### Other Languages

It was another bumper year for foreign language works (film and video) with submissions up by 27 per cent on 2001 to 1,052. Inuktitut was possibly the most unusual language in a film submitted in 2002. While the Board has

examiners fluent in Cantonese and Hindi, and uses interpreters for the other main languages, it was fortunate that *Atanarjuat – The Fast Runner*, the first film ever to be made in Inuktitut, the language of the Inuit, was subtitled.

The largest number of foreign language submissions were South Asian language works from the seven South Asian nations – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. This represented an increase of 24 per cent over 2001 with the majority (232) being Hindi language works. Tamil language films and videos increased to 73, following a temporary drop in 2001. Other languages represented in South Asian language works included Bengali, Gujarati, Malayalam, Punjabi, Telegu and Urdu. Although Farsi language works tend to be of Iranian origin they are included here because Farsi is a minority language in India and Pakistan.

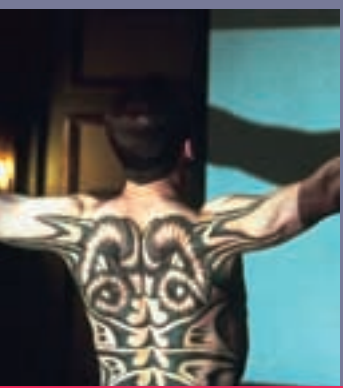
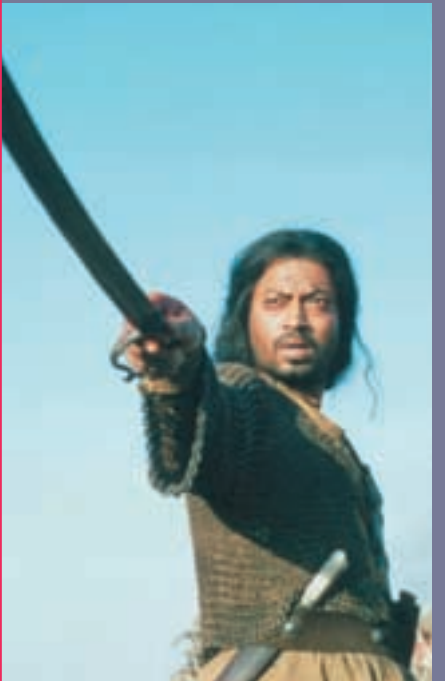
The increasing popularity for South Asian cinema, particularly 'Bollywood' (cinema originating from Mumbai and Northern India), was reflected in a new strand at the Edinburgh International Film Festival. The BBFC presented well-received 'master classes' in South Asian cinema both at the Edinburgh Film Festival and the Glasgow Film Theatre.

A wide range of theme and treatment was evident in the year's South Asian language submissions and the trend towards more 'western'-influenced style and content continued.

*Monsoon Wedding* was a 'cross-over' movie in Hindi which had an instant appeal to both South Asian and English-speaking audiences and told the story of the events surrounding a wedding in a middle-class Indian family. This movie was notable for its exploration of child abuse within the Indian extended family context and was passed uncut '15' for the sexual abuse theme and strong language.

Atanarjuat the Fast Runner '15'  
Men In Black II 'PG'  
The Sum Of All Fears '12'





The Warrior '12'  
Platform '15'  
Red Dragon '15'

Asif Kapadia's debut feature *The Warrior*, passed '12' uncut for some restrained violence and horror, was about a warrior caste man who faces personal tragedy and decides to give up his warrior ways. The Tamil language movie *The Terrorist* handled the topical subject of the inner motivations of a suicide bomber with restraint. It was also passed '12' uncut for discreet violence and horror.

The Farsi feature *Secret Ballot* told the story of a female Iranian official determined that the citizens of a coastal region of Iran should exercise their right to vote. Despite challenging themes of women's political rights and the age of consent for marriage, the restraint of the treatment permitted an uncut 'U' classification.

Amongst other works with a political theme, three Hindi language films told the story of Bhagat Singh (a man martyred in the cause of Indian liberation from British rule): *The Legend of Bhagat Singh, Shaheed-E-Aazam Bhagat Singh* and *23rd March 1931 Shaheed*. All three versions presented the classification challenge of police brutality and violence. In the end, however, all were passed 'PG' uncut because the violence was sufficiently discreet and was mitigated by the narrative and historical/biographical context in which it took place.

The Saratchandra Chatterjee novel *Devdas* has been adapted for the big screen many times before but the 2002 Sanjay Leela Bhansali version, starring Shah Rukh Khan, was notable for its production and song and dance sequences. Its difficult theme of courtesan culture was sufficiently well handled to result in a 'PG' classification.

Movies such as *Devdas* and *The Warrior* demonstrated the adoption of western production values and a gradual but perceptible drift away from traditional Bollywood themes and treatments to more Hollywood-style movies and plots. Ram Gopal Varma's *Company*, about the real-life happenings among Mumbai's underworld, received a '15' classification for its combination of strong violence and a crime and corruption theme. Perhaps the most obvious American homage was the eagerly awaited movie *Kaante*. Featuring a star cast, this was a Bollywood mix of *Reservoir Dogs*, *Heat* and *The Usual Suspects*. The violence, bloodless though it was, resulted in a '15' uncut rating.

The year began and ended with movies dealing with issues touching on Indian-Pakistani conflict. The Hindi language film *Maa Tujhhe Salaam*, at the beginning of the year, told the story of an Indian army officer fighting Pakistani-backed rebels along the 'line of control' between India and Pakistan in Kashmir. The '18' classification reflected the strong violence in the film but the BBFC noted also the possibility of offence from its anti-Pakistani dialogue.

The Telegu language film *Khadgam* came at the end of 2002 and featured a conflict of loyalties for two Indian Muslim brothers. This complex work interrogated the strongly held beliefs and prejudices of both Indian Muslims and Hindus. The portrayal of a Pakistani-backed terrorist group raised concerns about possible difficulties among South Asian communities in the UK arising from the anti-Pakistani rhetoric and anti-Muslim violence in the film. However, the work presented a balanced narrative critical of both Muslim and Hindu extremism. It received an uncut '18' classification for strong bloody violence and the terrorism theme.



Cantonese television series, all produced by Hong Kong's biggest commercial television station, made up the majority of Chinese video works submitted to the Board for classification. Mandarin features, though including international festival prize winners such as *Beijing Bicycle* and *Platform*, constituted only a small number of submissions. Twenty-two Cantonese drama series were classified on video in the year. Fairies and demons, heroic warriors and gentle princesses continued to be staple fare in period dramas such as *In The Realm of Fancy*, *The Battle Against Evil* and *Treasure Raiders*, while police negotiators (*Take My Word For It*), fire-fighters (*Burning Flame II*), private detectives (*The Trust of a Life Time*) and student nurses (*The White Flame*) featured in contemporary dramas. Hong Kong's cross-border contacts with China provided the basis for plots about love and work in *Fight for Love* and *A Herbalist Affair*. *Let's Face It* and *Slim Chances* took a moral tone, showing the importance of perseverance and tolerance in coping with the territory's economic downturn. These drama series provide a readily accessible cultural link for the UK Chinese community.



Cantonese drama series mainly attracted 'PG' or '12' categories for mild violence and sexual references, but selected episodes from *Golden Faith* and *Good Against Evil* were classified '15' for hard drugs references. Cuts for 'PG' were made to two episodes of

the long-running period slapstick comedy series *Virtues of Harmony*, to remove instructive details of the portrayal of attempted suicide by hanging, and to render the work suitable for its established family audience.

Other Chinese video submissions, either dubbed into English or subtitled to cater for the mainstream market, were predominantly action adventures from the 80's and early 90's and featured kung fu stars such as Jackie Chan and Sammo Hung. They were mainly classified '15' or '18' for action violence. The majority of them were older videos which had originally been classified by the Board some years ago. *Martial Monks of Shaolin Temple*, a Hong Kong made kung fu saga, had been subject to cuts in the past to remove sight of nunchukas, but was passed '18' without cuts under the current Guidelines policy which places its emphasis pragmatically on the likelihood of dangerous imitability or harm. Examples of more recent features on video were *Avenging Fist* and *Cheap Killers*. Cuts were made in line with the requirements of the Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act to remove cruelty to chickens in the cop thriller-cum-political melodrama *Island of Greed*.

### Sexual Violence

The Board's strict policy on potentially harmful representations of sexual violence in film, video and digital media remains firmly in place. It is accepted that sexual violence is a legitimate theme for exploration and that adults have a right to regulate their own viewing, whatever the theme. However, the Board will continue to remove scenes or images which may be harmful to the individual, or to society, both for cinema and in line with the requirements of the Video Recordings Act 1984.







The Lord of the Rings - The Two Towers '12A'

Sexual violence in fact is generally handled responsibly by film makers and can usually be dealt with through the classification system, with the given category reflecting the strength of the material. The Board is, however, particularly concerned with scenes or narratives which offer sexual violence for the pleasure of viewers or which even suggest that victims 'deserve' or 'enjoy' the sexual assault. Although the research on potentially harmful 'media effects' remains inconclusive in most areas, the Board does accept that certain violent scenes with the potential to trigger sexual arousal may encourage an association between sexual violence and sexual gratification. Where there is the possibility of harm which cannot be contained through classification alone, the Board may require cuts.

During 2002 the Board made cuts to two cinema features for sexual violence. The Hindi film *Jaani Dushman – Ek Nokhi Rhani* had two cuts for sexual violence (in addition to further cuts for more general violence) to secure a 'PG' classification. Although both scenes were sufficiently discreet to have been acceptable at '12', to obtain a 'PG' the company chose to reduce two rape scenes to the narrative minimum only.

The second film was Takashi Miike's *Ichii The Killer*. This Japanese feature, based on a manga comic, was the object of much consideration before a final decision was made. In the end the Board required approximately three and a quarter minutes of cuts before passing the film with an '18' certificate. These are the most substantial cuts required by the Board to an '18' rated cinema film since 1994. Scenes cut from the film involved women being sexually mutilated, beaten or killed. They contained images of erotically explicit violence which have never been passed by the Board at any classification level. The feature was subsequently submitted to the Board on video in a pre-cut form, with the unacceptable material omitted. No further cuts were required and the video was also passed with an '18' certificate.

One particularly high profile film passed '18' without cuts for cinema release by the Board in 2002 was the French feature *Irreversible*. The film, which centres around a rape and the events which result from that, attracted controversy when a number of people walked out from the screening at the Cannes film festival. Before passing the film the Board took advice from a clinical forensic psychiatrist about the rape scene in particular. She confirmed the Board's view that the scene was a harrowing and vivid portrayal of the brutality of rape; it contained no explicit sexual images and was not designed to titillate. The Board was satisfied, therefore, that no issue of harm arose in the context of a release for adult viewing only.

A number of films had cuts made to remove scenes or images of sexual or sexualised violence on video/DVD. Two Japanese works, *Angel Guts: Red Classroom* and *Evil Dead Trap (Shiryo No Wana)*, were cut to remove eroticising detail - from a rape scene, in the first case, and of a knife cutting flesh in a sexualised context, in the second.

A number of cuts were requested to the re-titled Italian horror *Cannibal Ferox 2* to reduce a series of sexual assaults to a level consistent with our Guidelines policy. The concern was to remove those elements in which the sexual violence was clearly eroticised.

A cut was required also to remove a scene in which a woman was restrained and whipped in *Forbidden Rage: White Slave Secrets*. Extensive cuts were required to the feature *Nutbag*, principally to remove scenes which dwelt on the sadistic torture and killing of naked women. Cuts were also required to two trailers for *Nutbag* to remove images of sexual violence cut from the feature.

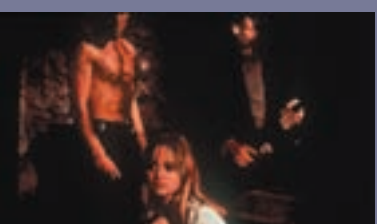
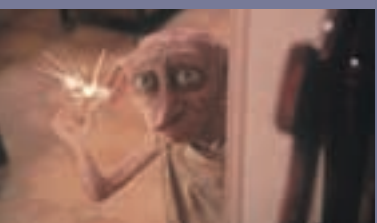




Two significant films from 2001 were submitted on video this year. The French feature *Baise-Moi* was originally passed '18' on film with a single cut to remove an explicit image of sexual penetration in a rape scene. Taking into account the particular domestic context of video and DVD, including the ability to re-run certain scenes repeatedly, the Board required the original cut to the rape scene plus an additional cut to remove sight of a gun being pressed into a man's anus prior to being fired, before passing the video at '18'. Another French feature, *A Ma Soeur!*, was passed without cuts on film in 2001 after the Board took advice from a leading QC and a consultant clinical psychologist. The concerns of the psychologist, that a rape scene involving a young girl was similar to the type of material paedophiles might use to groom their victims, was very carefully considered. The Board concluded that the likelihood of young children being taken into an '18' rated film in a cinema with a view to grooming them was sufficiently remote. However, video release of the feature was another matter. Its widespread availability for home viewing substantially increased the potential for abuse. The views of a second consultant clinical psychologist were sought specifically in relation to a video release and she too concluded that in this context the rape scene could be used as a grooming tool. The Board therefore required a cut to remove the detail of the rape of the young girl, before the video was passed '18'.

A number of works which had been cut many years previously by the Board were resubmitted. It was now possible to pass *Jail Birds* and *The Big Bird Cage* without cuts since no elements were now judged likely to eroticise or endorse sexual violence. Other previously cut features remained more problematic. Although it was passed on film in 1976, the video version of *Island of Death* had been refused classification in 1987. Before the Board could give it an '18' certificate for video release in 2002, several cuts were still necessary, mainly to remove scenes of sexual violence. *Emanuelle and the Last Cannibals* was submitted on video for the first time since cuts were required to the film in 1978. Twenty-four years had done little to reduce the impact of scenes of sexual violence, or the potential for harm. A number of cuts were required to remove scenes of rape and sexual mutilation. Cuts made in 1990 to the feature *Fair Trade* were also maintained, as were cuts in 1994 to the '15' rated *The Awful Doctor Orlof*.

Similarly, *The Big Racket* (previously rejected in 1977) was classified '18' for video only after cuts to remove the emphasis on nudity in a violent rape. *Maniac*, previously rejected for both cinema and video release, was now cut to remove sexualised killings before being passed '18'. Among the most substantial cuts made to a single feature this year were to *House on the Edge of the Park*. Nearly 12 minutes were removed from the video, which had been rejected on film in 1981, before it could be given an '18' classification. Cuts were required to several sequences of sexual violence, humiliating female nudity and gross violence. Previously rejected on film in 1984, the video version of *The New York Ripper*, a dubbed Italian serial killer film, required cuts to a scene of sexualised violence where a woman was mutilated with a razor blade.



Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets 'PG'  
Straw Dogs '18'





This year saw Sam Peckinpah's *Straw Dogs* passed uncut for the first time on video and DVD. The feature was originally passed on film in 1971. In 1999 a pre-cut version was refused a classification certificate for video after the distributor declined to make cuts to a rape scene. Paradoxically, the pre-cut version left the viewer with the impression that the victim enjoyed being raped – a message endorsing sexual violence and falling foul of Board policy. The version considered by the Board this year was the uncut original version with the unambiguously unpleasant conclusion to the rape scene restored – making it clear that the victim did not enjoy the violation. Before being passed, the feature was shown to leading clinical psychologists specialising in work with sex offenders. They endorsed the view of the Board that the present uncut version was not harmful and was not likely to encourage an interest in rape or abusive behaviour. The BBFC also commissioned some research into the attitudes of video renters to sexual violence in specific titles. Interestingly, while respondents took a critical view of other videos, little concern was expressed about *Straw Dogs* and the viewing panel was strongly in favour of passing it uncut.

It was noted in last year's Annual Report that *The Last House on the Left* was rejected after the distributor declined to make the required cuts, and that he had appealed the BBFC decision to the Video Appeals Committee (VAC). The hearing took place in May 2002 and the VAC dismissed the appeal. A full account is provided in the section headed **Video Appeals Committee**.

Only one work was wholly rejected by the Board in 2002 on the grounds of sexual violence. This was the 1969 exploitation feature *Love Camp 7*, in which Jewish women are forced to provide sexual services in a World War Two SS camp. The feature consisted mainly of scenes of sexual activity in a non-consensual context, and both eroticised and endorsed sexual assault. The possibility of cuts to permit classification is always considered. However, given the quantity of unacceptable material in this case, this was not a viable option.

### Sex

After the policy changes and precedents of recent years, 2002 offered fewer significant developments in terms of the classification of the depiction of sex in films and videos. The BBFC Classification Guidelines continued to be applied and the resulting decisions attracted very little complaint from either the public or the industry.

The Guidelines allow for more graphic portrayals of sex in '15' rated films and videos where there is sufficient emphasis on responsible, loving and developing relationships. This reflects the public view, expressed during extensive consultation, that the context in which sexual activity is depicted should be considered alongside the detail of the depiction itself, especially when considering classifications below '18'. The award winning US film *Monster's Ball* contained at least one sex scene which might have justified an '18' certificate had it occurred in a film offering sexual thrills as the primary pleasure. Carefully placed in a serious and moving drama, and clearly intended to provide insight into the characters involved, their emotional states and their complex relationship, the scene was judged to be acceptable in the context of the film as a whole at certificate '15'.



Sex continues to be a subject of considerable interest for serious film makers, though perhaps surprisingly few choose to use the most explicit images in their work. During 2002, group sex scenes with *brief* images of real sex featured in two very different '18' rated cinema films. *Dog Days*, an award winning German language film from Austria, which intertwined six stories of Viennese suburban life, used the images to introduce the audience to a grieving mother seeking solace in mechanical and loveless sexual activity. A British film, *Principles of Lust*, followed a writer suffering from writer's block as he attempted to choose between a life of orthodox domesticity and one of 'living on the edge'. The brief images occurred in an 'orgy' scene which was pivotal to his rejection of the more extreme lifestyle choice open to him.



The Board does not in fact operate a completely 'open road' policy with regard to sex in cinema films for adults. BBFC Guidelines require that the more explicit images of sexual activity should be justified by context and 12 seconds of Bertrand Bonello's *Le Pornographe* – *The Pornographer* were judged to have failed this test. The film featured scenes on the set of a porn film complete with graphic images of real sex – which were not cut. However, a shot of a man ejaculating onto the face of a woman was considered insufficiently justified by the context and likely to exceed public expectations for an '18' cinema film. This cut was repeated for the '18' rated video

release. An uncut video version was subsequently passed at 'R18' allowing it to be sold only in licensed sex shops.

Submissions of explicit pornographic videos intended for the 'R18' category were higher in 2002 than in 2001 although the numbers eased off towards the end of the year. As there are a limited number of sex shops in which the works can be sold, the figures are not expected to rise significantly further. Although the criteria for 'R18' works allow explicit sight of real sex between consenting adults, this category is now easily the most heavily censored of all BBFC ratings, with some 15.4 per cent of 'R18' features requiring cuts. The percentage of 'R18' titles subjected to cuts in 2002 was more than double the percentage for 2001 as attempts by sections of the industry to push the boundaries were met with a very clear and firm resolve to uphold the standards agreed in 2000.

BBFC Guidelines set out clearly the type of pornographic material which remains unacceptable. This includes material which is itself in breach of the criminal law, material likely to encourage an interest in abusive sexual activity, sexual activity involving lack of consent, the infliction of pain or physical harm (unless mild and consensual), and activity which is degrading or dehumanising (including bestiality, necrophilia, defecation and urolagnia). In accordance with the Guidelines, sex works were cut to remove sequences in which participants were hit, humiliated, abused, asphyxiated, or penetrated by objects likely to cause harm, or in which they indulged in role play as non-adults. Cuts were also made to sequences which suggested that the sexual activity was not consensual, and to verbal references to sex with persons under the age of 16.

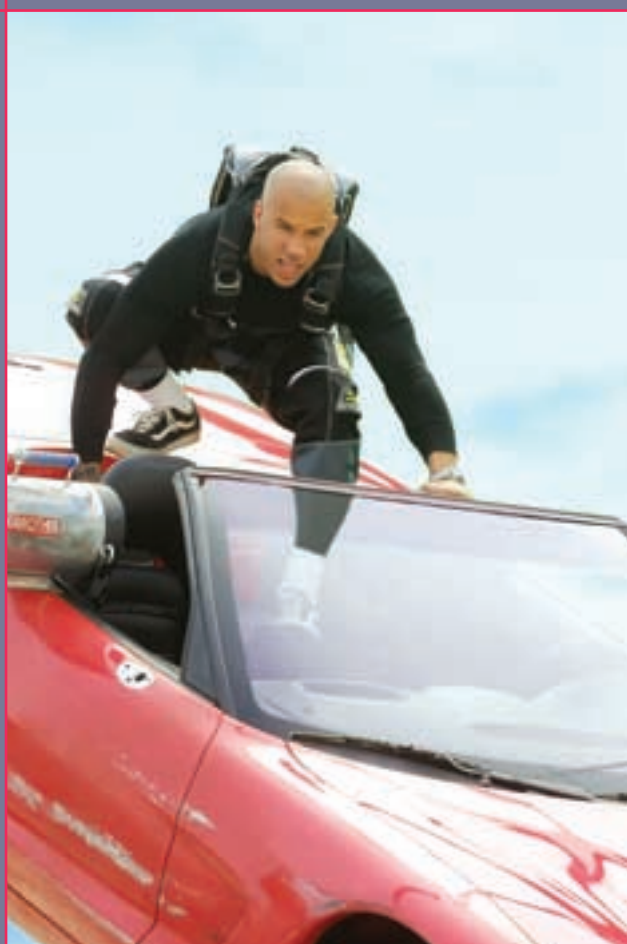
Whenever there was any doubt concerning the age of the participants or the legality of the actual process of filming (for example with regard to public indecency issues), distributors were required to provide convincing evidence that neither UK law nor BBFC Guidelines had been broken.

The Pornographer '18'

XXX '12A'

The Getaway '18'

The Principles of Lust '18'



When such evidence was not forthcoming, cuts were required. The Sexual Offences Bill is expected to have significant implications for BBFC policy with regard to pornography and any necessary changes will be made when the Bill becomes law.

The year 2002 saw a number of initiatives from the Board with regard to sexual material. Building on foundations laid the previous year, the BBFC hosted a conference for health experts and distributors of 'R18' material to discuss the practicalities of placing 'safer sex' warnings on pornographic videos. Industry representatives agreed that a simple caption message could be placed at the start of most new 'R18' video works. A selection of approved short caption messages was drawn up by experts from the Department of Health, The Terrence Higgins Trust and the Health Promotion Service of Camden Primary Care Trust, and distributed to the industry. By the end of 2002 many distributors had given firm commitments to carry the warnings on their product and the BBFC will continue to encourage members of the industry to join the scheme. The messages themselves will be reviewed periodically to reflect developments in health education materials.

Understanding of material likely to stimulate those with paedophile interests was enhanced by a seminar in which BBFC examining staff were addressed by an expert in the treatment of sex offenders and by a Detective Chief Inspector from the Metropolitan Police Paedophile Unit.

The Board continued to seek advice on the potential for harm from the portrayal of some unusual sexual practices from a consultant physician specialising in sexual health. Cuts were made whenever appropriate.

## Digital Media

In line with previous years, digital media submissions in 2002 formed a tiny proportion of the overall number of works received by the Board, though a slight increase in submissions produced a total of 35 compared to 28 received last year. This was predominantly due to non-linear DVD 'extras' in the form of accompanying CD-ROMs included with the main DVD feature. These CD-ROMs generally contain supplementary material such as trailers, interactive movie trivia quizzes and simple games.

Most video games in the market-place are exempted from the requirement that they be classified by the BBFC. Consequently, many that are submitted to the Board are 'hard-core' action games which have lost their exemption under the terms of the Video Recordings Act due to their levels of violence or other anti-social content. Correspondingly, soft-porn CD-ROMs must be submitted and are invariably classified at the adult category.

The number of digital works classified in each category during 2002 was as follows:

'U'	'PG'	'12'	'15'	'18'
6	4	2	14	9

No digital submissions were rejected in 2002 and only one work, a soft-core sex CD-ROM, had cuts made to explicit sexual detail in order to meet the distributor's request for an '18' category.







Though digital submissions were passed without incident, one or two works did stir up some brief interest amongst the press and the public. The CD-ROM *Hooligans – Storm over Europe* purported to be a football hooligan simulation game in which the player takes charge of a gang of supporters intent on creating mayhem when visiting rival football teams throughout Europe. Mixing live-action video, in which actors pretend to be leaders of various ‘firms’, with a digital army of miniature thugs, the game was less about encouraging users to take pleasure in violent street fighting than a satirical lambasting of football hooligans themselves. This did not prevent some negative reviews of the game and a number of retailers refusing to stock it. The Board took the view that the outstanding issue with the game was one of offence and poor taste rather than any potential harm. The work was passed ‘18’ (uncut) in order to limit its accessibility to younger people, for whom the anti-social themes, however satirically presented, might be less appropriate.

Two other games which received a fair amount of press publicity were *Grand Theft Auto 3: Vice City* and *The Getaway*. These were somewhat similar in that each was set in the criminal underworld where the player is required to undertake a number of missions on behalf of various gang bosses. These missions included car-jacking, assassinating rival gangsters and delivering or collecting consignments of drugs while evading the attempts of the local police to capture them. *Vice City* sought to recapture the mood and atmosphere of 80s Miami. *The Getaway* was set in contemporary London and straddled the world of both film and computer games, with a certain amount of homage to British gangster movies such as *Get Carter*, *Gangster No.1* and *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. Both games were rated ‘18’ for theme, violent and sexual content. They were not, however, without morality. Criminal behaviour in *The Getaway* in particular often resulted in the players being arrested or killed by the police or rival gangsters. Players

were offered no insights into how to commit crimes nor were the games in conflict with the Video Recordings Act constraint on works which feature ‘techniques likely to be useful in the commission of offences’.

One final point worthy of note is the pan-European advisory games rating system, set up by the games industry on a self-regulatory basis, which is due to take effect in early 2003. Agreement has now been reached and the system will be administered by the Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audio-visual Media (NICAM). The voluntary system is not unlike the ELSPA scheme in the UK and provides recommended age-restrictions together with consumer advice in pictogram form, illustrating what the pertinent issue is within each game: violence, drugs, sex, etc.

Most EU countries have signed up to the scheme though there are one or two national differences which may prevent it from being accepted wholesale. Germany has opted out and intends to operate its own legally binding system of classification. Portugal and Finland also have legal hurdles to overcome and in the UK the new arrangements cannot circumvent the Video Recordings Act. Here, the Video Standards Council will act on behalf of NICAM to ensure that games which lose their exemption under the Act are not inadvertently given an advisory rating.

The Board in general welcomes such a move to bring consistency to European games ratings, and notes that if it is to succeed at all, it should do so in the narrow context of video games where the relevant ratings measures can be very simple and straightforward. Nevertheless, the BBFC, whose perspective is of a regulator which is wholly independent of the industry whose work it classifies, has some concern that any system run by games publishers themselves may find itself ultimately driven by the convenience of the industry rather than the concerns of the consumer and the public.





video appeals  
committee68

The Video Appeals Committee (VAC) is an independent body constituted under Section 4(3) of the Video Recordings Act 1984 to hear appeals from submitting companies against any BBFC decisions they consider stricter than warranted.

One appeal was heard in 2002, the first since 1999 and only the sixteenth appeal against a BBFC decision since the introduction of the Video Recordings Act. This appeal, lodged by Blue Underground Ltd, was against the Board's decision to require cuts to scenes of sexual violence and humiliation in a horror video entitled *The Last House on the Left*. The appeal was lodged towards the end of 2001, the hearing took place in May 2002 and the VAC delivered its judgment on 18 June 2002.

The appellant, Blue Underground Ltd, argued that the Board was incorrect to insist on cuts to the work, which was intended for the '18' category. The grounds of their appeal were (i) that the work in question did not breach the Obscene Publications Act, (ii) that the work did not breach the Board's policy on sexual violence because it did not eroticise or endorse sexual violence, (iii) that the Board's policy on sexual violence was in any event based on flawed research, which did not relate to material of this nature, (iv) that the work was not likely to cause harm to viewers within the meaning of the Video Recordings Act 1984, (v) that the Board had made a procedural error by not stating the full reason for the cuts, (vi) that the precise cuts requested were arbitrary and inconsistent with cuts asked for in the same work in 1999 and (vii) that the work had been licensed for screening as a cinema film, uncut, by three local authorities and none of these screenings had attracted any prosecutions or public complaints.



The Board's own history with *The Last House on the Left* is a lengthy and complicated one. The work was originally submitted to the BBFC in 1974 for cinema release, at which time it was refused a classification certificate outright. It was felt that cuts could not make it acceptable for an adult cinema certificate because of its extreme depiction of violence and sexual violence. In 1982 the work was briefly made available on video (before the Video Recordings Act required video classification) and promptly attracted the attentions of the Director of Public Prosecutions, who added the film to his list of potentially obscene 'video nasties'. The film was seized from a number of retail and rental outlets and was successfully prosecuted under the Obscene Publications Act on over a hundred occasions between 1983 and 1987. After 1987 the Video Recordings Act came fully into force and the number of prosecutions for obscenity dropped. Nonetheless, there were still two occasions after 1987, up to and including 1994, on which *The Last House on the Left* received convictions under the Obscene Publications Act.



In 1999, *The Last House on the Left* was submitted to the BBFC for a cinema certificate by the Feature Film Company. This was the first time the Board had been asked to consider the film since its initial rejection in 1974. After much deliberation, the Board agreed that the film could be passed '18' for cinema release, subject to the deletion of one minute 17 seconds of footage involving the rape, torture, humiliation and degradation of two young women. The distributor, however, declined to make the requested cuts and the film was formally rejected in 2000.

In 2001, the film's new distributor, Blue Underground Ltd, approached the Board regarding the possibility of obtaining a video certificate for *The Last House on the Left*. At a meeting at the BBFC it was made clear to Blue Underground that the Board still had serious concerns about the film's treatment of sexual violence. Nonetheless, Blue Underground proceeded with a formal submission of *The Last House on the Left* in July 2001.

On this occasion, the Board judged that it would be appropriate to make fewer cuts than had been requested in 1999. This was in part because the Board's new Guidelines, issued in September 2000, placed greater emphasis than previously upon potential harm and less upon offence (though that remained a factor) at the adult level. Nonetheless, the BBFC still insisted on the removal of 16 seconds of the more extreme acts of sexual violence and humiliation before an '18' video certificate could be granted. Blue Underground refused to make any cuts to the film, which they argued was a significant piece of horror cinema history, and the video was therefore rejected by the Board as unsuitable for classification in its present form. The company then appealed against the Board's decision to the VAC.

In explaining its reasons for requiring cuts, the Board pointed to precedent (decisions previously taken under the Guidelines), the evidence of research, and public acceptability. Research demonstrated that the sexually

violent content of the film might feed the desires of some disturbed viewers, thereby causing harm to them and – should they act upon their impulses – to society as a whole. The Board also recognised that the sexual violence shown in the film was unlikely to be acceptable to British viewers and the public generally.

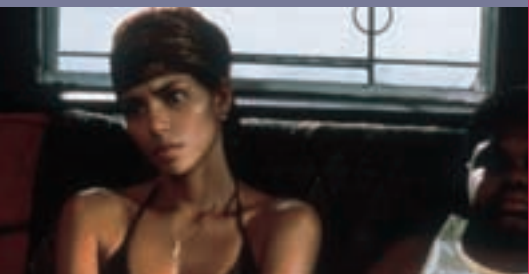
With regard to the possibility of harm arising from the video, the Board presented a summary of the extensive research undertaken into the effects of sexually violent material upon viewers. Although the Board finds the research evidence for a causal link between films and real life violence contradictory and inconclusive, the body of evidence concerning the potentially harmful effects of sexually violent material is somewhat stronger and more convincing. The Board is required by the Video Recordings Act 1984 to consider what harm might be caused to viewers by video works. Sexual violence is an area on which the Board has always therefore been extremely cautious. Where films appear to relish or eroticise sexual assault they are likely to receive cuts or be rejected outright, as in the case of *The Last House on the Left*.

Turning to the issue of public acceptability, the Board's position was backed up by both the BBFC's classification Guidelines, themselves the result of a major public consultation exercise, and by a research exercise in which a number of films featuring sexual violence, including *The Last House on the Left*, had been shown to public focus groups. Of the six films shown - *Death Wish II*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Straw Dogs*, *I Spit on Your Grave*, *Baise-Moi*, *The Last House on the Left* - it was *The Last House on the Left* that was found to be the least acceptable. Viewers described the film as 'gruesome and sickening', 'revolting', 'extremely disturbing' and 'disturbing and sadistic'. The history of convictions against the film under the Obscene Publications Act added further weight to the Board's case that the public is not prepared to tolerate this kind of material.



Blade II '18'





XXX '12A'  
Monsters Ball '15'  
Chicago '12A'

In its written judgment, the Video Appeals Committee agreed unanimously with the Board that *The Last House on the Left* should not be classified '18' uncut. It found 'aspects of the video very disturbing' and considered that the importance of freedom of expression did not in this case outweigh the need to take a cautious approach. The VAC found the Board's Guidelines to be 'a sensible and accurate reflection of public concern especially where violence and sexual violence is concerned' and commented that 'this video work is substantially in conflict with them'. The VAC was concerned that 'there is a continual atmosphere of sexuality and violence ... the viewer is asked to relish the violence, the violence is relentless and the parts to be cut are the extreme end of that violence and humiliation. We are of the opinion that a significant number of viewers would be fascinated by the violence and excited into amoral behaviour, in other words harm may be caused.'

Nonetheless, whilst endorsing the Board's position on sexual violence generally and its position on this film in particular, the VAC did have a number of criticisms. First, the VAC agreed with Blue Underground that the Board had made a procedural error in failing to make clear the full reasons for the cuts when it issued a cuts letter. The Board argued in its defence that the distributors had already been aware of the reasons for the Board's objections from earlier correspondence and face-to-face discussion. However, whilst the VAC agreed that Blue Underground were indeed aware of the reasons for the Board's determination and therefore could not have been prejudiced in this case, the VAC urged the Board to be more careful in the future about the terms of such determinations. Secondly, the VAC made it clear that it was reluctant to attach a great deal of weight to Section 3 forfeiture orders made under the Obscene Publications Act. Furthermore, in a number of cases it

appeared the work in question had not been viewed by a jury, still less given the benefit of arguments regarding its artistic or cultural justification. Thirdly, the VAC, in endorsing the Board's decision to cut, nonetheless indicated that the extent of the Board's cuts had been more generous to the film maker than they would have expected.





Seven new members were appointed to the VAC in 2002. The posts were advertised in the national press and the appointments were made by an independent panel chaired by Sir Thomas Legg KCB QC.

The new members are:

Barry Davies: Former Deputy Director of Social Services and Chair of Area Child Protection Committee.

Now consultant in child protection and investigator of complaints made by children under the Children Act 1989.

Pauline Gray: Barrister, part-time Chairman of Appeals Tribunals, Trustee of Relate, Member, RSPCA Director General's Remuneration Committee.

Professor John Last, CBE DLitt: Chair in museum studies at City University, London with part-time teaching contract. Company Chairman and former lay member of the Press Council.

Dr Sara Levene, MA MRCP FRCPCH: Paediatric safety consultant; Medical Qualified Panel Member of the Appeals Service; former Medical Advisor to the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths and to the Child Accident Prevention Trust.

Robert Moore, BSc (Econ) Dip.App.Soc.St. CQSW: Independent consultant in social care; former Director of Social Services and one time Children's Officer.

Peter Rees: Retired primary headteacher.

Dr Mike Slade: Chartered clinical psychologist; Clinical Senior Lecturer at Institute of Psychiatry, London; Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society.

The existing members are:

### **President**

John Wood CB: Solicitor; Consultant to Morgan Lewis, Solicitors; former Director of the Serious Fraud Office; former Director of Public Prosecutions in Hong Kong.

### **Members**

Nina Bawden, CBE, MA, FRSL, JP: Novelist; President, Society of Women Writers and Journalists.

Biddy Baxter, MBE, DLitt, FRSA, FRTS; Former producer of Children's Programmes; BBC Editor, Blue Peter; Consultant to the Director General of the BBC; Author and broadcaster.

Professor Philip Graham: Vice President, National Children's Bureau; Emeritus Professor of Child Psychiatry, Institute of Child Health, University of London.

Haydon Luke: former secondary headteacher and inspector, now education consultant and trainer, working in the fields of secondary education and education in and through museums and galleries.

Dr Neville March Hunnings: Lawyer; author; former editor of Common Market Law Reports; former member of the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education and Conduct; editor of the Encyclopaedia of European Union Law.

Claire Rayner, OBE: Author; writer; broadcaster; President of the Patients Association; President of the British Humanist Association.

The Hon. Mrs Sara Morrison, FRSA: Chairman WWF and Pro-chancellor of Bath University. Retired full time Director of large industrial plc. Several non-executive Directorships including Channel Four TV.

Fay Weldon, CBE, MA, DLitt, FRSL: Writer.





consultative  
council76

The Consultative Council was set up as a result of the Video Recordings Act, but is able to provide advice across a broad range of classification related issues. Its membership includes representatives from the broadcasting, record and leisure software industries as well as the video industry. In addition, representatives from local government and persons of individual distinction and expertise bring their knowledge and experience to bear on the issues discussed at the thrice-yearly meetings. The change of responsibility for the BBFC from the Home Office to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport meant a change in the Government observer who attended Council meetings. Observers from the Metropolitan Police, the Internet Watch Foundation and the Independent Television Commission have also contributed to discussion.

#### **Advisory '12' rating for cinema**

The Consultative Council was kept closely informed about the progress towards the replacement of the mandatory '12' rating for cinema films. The BBFC classifies films on behalf of UK councils, which have the statutory responsibility for licensing local cinemas. Representatives of the UK local authorities on the Consultative Council therefore had a particular interest in the outcome of the pilot in Norwich to test the advisory '12' rating and the subsequent national survey to test public opinion. Amongst matters considered by members was the issue of parental accompaniment and the extent to which it was already a factor in the case of 'U' and 'PG' rated films. Members noted public concerns about the possible abuse of the accompaniment requirement. They were satisfied that, in practice, the risks were very limited. Council members endorsed the Board's requirement that

Consumer Advice be made available before any final decision about introducing the '12A'. The Council discussed the form of that Consumer Advice and also the improvement of its presentation on DVD and video packaging. The BBFC's Director told the November meeting that the Board would be monitoring '12A' and that if there were significant problems the Board would consider any measures necessary to correct them.

#### **Director's Reports**

Each meeting received a report from the BBFC's Director reviewing recent Board activity. Members were able to comment on issues of efficiency as well as on classification decisions. The outcome of the Video Appeals Committee consideration of the appeal by the distributors of *The Last House on the Left* (see the section on the **Video Appeals Committee**) was welcomed. Members also noted the campaign by certain cinema exhibitors to persuade local authorities to relax the BBFC's '12' rating for *Spider-man*; and urged the BBFC to take a firm line in resisting what were perceived as commercially-driven arguments.

#### **European Video Games Rating System**

At the November meeting the Council's European Leisure Software Publishers Association representative reported that negotiations for a European-wide video games rating system had resulted in the Dutch organisation Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audio-visual Media (NICAM) being contracted for all non-mandatory ratings. The Video Standards Council was subcontracted to carry out the function in the UK ensuring that those games which fell under the Video Recordings Act continued to be submitted to the BBFC for statutory classification.



### Film Screenings and Discussions

Like the Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing, the Consultative Council watched a recently submitted or classified film before each of their meetings and discussed the issues which the film raised, in particular whether there were any specific concerns which might come up when the work was transferred to video. The February meeting watched *Black Hawk Down*, an American war film which had been given a '15' rating, though the Board had considered the possibility of an '18' rating. The meeting agreed with the lower rating, not least because members felt that it was important that 15 year-old boys should be able to see the horrors of war in contrast with the 'glamorized' violence on offer in other films aimed at that age group. It was felt that this particular film was unlikely to raise any issues on video, but the Council members were particularly keen to ensure that appropriate consumer advice was included on the packaging. They also welcomed the provision of consumer advice in the advertising for the cinema release.

The June meeting discussed *Baise-Moi*, one of the most controversial film classification decisions made by the BBFC in recent years. The Council viewed the cut version released for cinema. Discussion afterwards covered what constituted pornography and might warrant an 'R18' rating, the combination of sex and violence and the point

at which it becomes problematic, concerns about children viewing the work on video and whether additional cuts should be made to it on video. The meeting agreed that the Board would have to give further careful consideration to the work when it was submitted for video release.

The October meeting viewed *Irreversible*, another French film dealing with sexual violence. At this time the Board was still considering the classification options, including whether to pass the film cut or uncut, and the comments of the panel were of particular value. Council members with expertise in the field of human behaviour suggested that the length of the rape scene was likely to be aversive rather than arousing and that the violent attack with a fire extinguisher came too early in the film for audiences to identify with the so far unknown aggressor. There was concern expressed about how some audiences would view the film, for instance younger men with a possible predilection for sexual violence. However, the Council concluded that it would be appropriate for the work to be passed '18' without cuts. Members also discussed the film's use of strobe lighting effects and the BBFC's Director was able to assure the meeting that the distributor would be asked to ensure that a warning was placed at the box office so that anyone who might be susceptible was warned before purchasing a ticket.



The Guru '15'  
Resident Evil '15'  
Red Dragon '15'  
Die Another Day '12A'



Apart from the principal officers of the BBFC, the membership of the Consultative Council in 2002 was as follows:

Sheila Abrahams, JP (retired 2002)

Roger Bennett, European Leisure Software Publishers Association (ELSPA)

Cllr Tommy Brookes, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)

Lavinia Carey, British Video Association (BVA)

June Dromgoole, Channel 4 Television

Laurie Hall, Video Standards Council (VSC)

Steve Jenkins, BBC

Cllr Peter Kent, Local Government Association (LGA)

Bob Lewis, British Association of Record Dealers (BARD)

Cllr Maurice Mills, Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)

Cllr Goronwy Parry, Welsh Local Government Association

David Simpson, Chair, Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing (ex officio)

Roland Stokes, Entertainment Software Retailers Association (ESRA)

John Woodward, Film Council

### **Independent Members**

Dr Anthony Beech

Professor David Buckingham

Jean Coussins

Michael Marland

Professor Colin Munro

Colin Webb

Sally Whitaker

### **Observers**

Paul Alsey, Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Dick Diplock, Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS)

Eleanor Hodge, Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Simon Humphrey, Metropolitan Police Service

David Kerr, Internet Watch Foundation (retired 2002)

Guy Phelps, ITC

Stephen Saddler, Scottish Executive

Brian Ward, Metropolitan Police









advisory panel  
on children's  
viewing82

Given that the main thrust of the BBFC's work is the protection of children, the advice and support provided by the Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing was invaluable during 2002. The Panel, which meets three times a year, is made up of specialists in fields related to children and children's issues. They represent a range of disciplines including social work, clinical psychology and psychotherapy, education, the law and children's media.



### **The introduction of '12A'**

The APCV had been very supportive when the Board announced its proposals in 2001 to test public opinion about introducing an advisory '12' rating for cinema. It strongly endorsed, in particular, the principle of parental choice. Panel members were fully briefed about the outcomes of the Norwich pilot exercise at the meeting in March and the outcomes of the national research were discussed at the July meeting. Panel members had stressed the need for easily accessible Consumer Advice to be made available for films, particularly in the new '12A' category and they were assured that it would be available in cinema listings in the local press as well as in poster and television publicity for '12A' films. The Panel felt that it was important that information about the new category was available to parents and advised the Board to follow up the introduction of the new category with a publicity campaign to reinforce the first wave of information. (The Board ran a 60-second advertisement in all British cinemas from

January 2003.) The Panel urged the Board to emphasise that it was in partnership with parents and that its Consumer Advice should reflect their expectations being both sensitive, and avoiding repetition.

The November meeting considered the success of the launch of the new category and the attendant publicity. Panel members raised a number of issues, including whether young children would become disruptive because they were bored by films which were not intended for them. The meeting heard a report on press reaction to the launch and public response to the new category to date, which continues to be positive.

A related theme at Panel meetings was the need to promote greater media literacy, especially among younger audiences. The Panel welcomed the Board's Junior Roadshow initiative, and hoped it would continue its work with Film Education and with children below the 15 to 18 age range.

### **Drug Issues in Junior Categories**

In addition to providing advice on subjects which the Board raises, the Panel is free to consider any issue relating to classification in terms of its impact on children. At the July meeting the Panel looked at the portrayal of drugs in films aimed at children and teenagers. Before the discussion, Panel members had the opportunity to view the video *Rachel's Story*, which had been released by the Government for use in schools and appeared to have had a greater impact on parents than on teenagers. The classification Guidelines about drugs were discussed and the Board was able to tell members that drugs and drug use were not, in fact, regular elements in the films which came to the Board for classification. The Guidelines were still considered to be appropriate at the different classification levels. The softening of the Government's attitude towards cannabis was discussed and members raised questions about whether this might lead to an increase in the appearance of drugs in films.

### Computer Games Regulation and Research

The senior examiner with responsibility for computer games gave a presentation to the November meeting. Video games which involve gross violence against humans or animals or human sexual activity must come to the BBFC for classification, but this amounts to only around five per cent of games produced. The Panel discussed the paucity of research done in realistic domestic settings where children actually play the games. They also discussed whether games might actually lead to copycat violence. Panel members experienced in the field of behavioural psychology pointed out that a wide range of factors contribute to violent behaviour and that it was therefore impossible to isolate one particular cause. Concern was also expressed about improvements in digital technology and their possible impact on the realism of the violence.

### Film Screenings and Discussion

A particularly valuable feature of the APCV's work is the critical and professional reaction they provide to films shown before their meetings. The films selected for viewing in 2002 had all raised particular classification issues for the Board. In March the Panel viewed *The Lord of the Rings – The Fellowship of the Ring* and two of the Board's examiners outlined the issues before the open discussion. *The Lord of the Rings* had been awarded a 'PG' rating and this had resulted in some press comment and a number of letters of complaint, mainly from adults who had not taken children to see the film. The general view of the panel was that the 'PG' rating was appropriate. It was felt that the fantasy setting of the film sufficiently mitigated its impact for under-12s. Members particularly endorsed the provision of Consumer Advice warning that the film 'may not be suitable for under-8s' and welcomed the inclusion of this advice in television advertising.

The film shown before the July meeting was *Spider-man*. The Board had awarded the film a '12' rating although the distributor had asked for a 'PG' and the film and attendant merchandising had been heavily marketed at the under-12 age group. As a result of this around five per cent of local authorities around the country had changed the rating to either a 'PG' or 'PG12' in anticipation of the Board's introduction of '12A' later in the year. The Board was keen to see if the Panel thought that the higher rating was over cautious. The discussion covered difficult themes such as unresolved loss created by the death of the hero's uncle and father figure, something which the panel thought would be problematic for younger children. There was also concern about the schizoid/psychopathic nature of the Green Goblin, the sexual threat to the female lead, and about the level of violence generally. The outcome of the discussion was that the Panel felt that 'PG' was inappropriate with the majority feeling that '12A' would be appropriate, but not for the youngest children. APCV members were also highly critical of the heavy marketing aimed at younger children and the manipulation of how children influence their family's consumption. They expected the Board to continue to take a strong line when faced with pressure of this nature from distributors and exhibitors.

The film shown before the November meeting was *Minority Report*. The film had received its '12' classification before the introduction of '12A', but was still showing in cinemas after '12A' came into effect. This meant that the classification automatically changed to '12A', allowing children younger than 12 to see it. The Board's policy is that the Guidelines for '12A' remain the same as those for '12' rated films and there will therefore be occasions when films may be unsuitable for the youngest children. This may be particularly likely when a film, as in the case of *Minority Report*, is a 'high' '12A' (though not strong enough to justify a '15' rating). The Panel agreed that this film was a borderline '15' and had the potential to disturb younger or sensitive children. They commented in particular on the 'precog' characters and their evident suffering. Children might also be affected by the overall intensity of the narrative. Although '12A' was appropriate, the importance of consumer advice was considered to be particularly significant in the case of this film.

#### APCV Members

David Simpson: Youth Court District Judge (Chair)

Floella Benjamin OBE: Broadcaster, Independent TV  
Producer, writer

Karen Johnson: Commissioning Editor Children's  
Education (BBC)

Dr Sue Krasner: Chartered Clinical Psychologist

Winnie Lacey: Practice Manager, Assessment Services

Frances Lennox: Senior Crown Prosecutor

Dr Meira Likierman: Senior Child Psychotherapist

Alexander Paterson: Principal of a Residential School

Elsbeth Rea OBE: Independent Social Work Trainer

Naomi Rich: Editor/Producer, online educational  
resources

Lewis Rudd MBE: Former Controller of Children's  
Programmes (ITV)

Professor Jack Sanger: Director, Centre for Organisational  
Research, Anglia Polytechnic University





# Principal Officers of the BBFC

## **President**

Andreas Whittam Smith to 31 July 2002  
Sir Quentin Thomas from 1 August 2002

## **Vice Presidents**

Janet Lewis-Jones  
Lord Taylor of Warwick

## **Council of Management**

### **Chairman**

Brian Smith to 27 March 2002  
Ewart Needham from 27 March 2002

### **Vice Chairman**

Ewart Needham to 27 March 2002

### **Hon. Treasurer**

John Millard

## **Members**

Michael Cox  
John Holton  
Steve Jaggs  
William McMahon  
Sylvia Sheridan OBE  
John Wilson

## **Director**

Robin Duval

## **Deputy Director**

Penny Averill

## **Financial Controller**

Imtiaz Osman

## **Systems Co-ordinator**

David Harding

## **Head of Personnel**

Clive Hooper

## **Head of Communications**

Sue Clark





# Report of the Council for the year ended 31st December 2002

## Principal activities

The company, which is limited by guarantee, is responsible for the classification of cinema films and, in accordance with the terms of the Video Recordings Act 1984, for the classification of video works. Its revenue is derived principally from fees charged to distributors for the classification of their product.

## Business review

Submissions continued to rise in 2002 resulting in a significant increase in the Board's income compared with the previous year. As part of its commitment to providing an efficient service to its customers, the Board commenced a refurbishment programme to maximise the use of available space in its premises.

The distributor survey carried out by the Board indicates a small increase in video volume in 2003. The Board has been able to avoid any increases to its tariff since 1999. It will continue to review its fee structure levels in the light of industry forecasts for 2003 onwards.

## Council

The Members of the Council are shown on page 86. All voting Members of the Council of Management retire in accordance with the Articles of Association and, being eligible, offer themselves for re-election.

It is with deep regret that the Council report the death of their colleague Mr. P.P. Rigby on 9th April 2002. Mr. E.J. Needham succeeded Mr. J.B. Smith as Chairman on 27th March 2002. Mr. J.B. Smith retired from the Council on 7th November 2002.

## Members of the Council's Responsibilities

Company law requires the Members of the Council to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing those accounts, the Members are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- Prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Members of the Council are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and which enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.



# Report of the Council for the year ended 31st December 2002 (continued)

## **Corporate Governance**

The Council of Management continues to give careful consideration to, and has adopted the main principles of, corporate governance as set out in the Code of Best Practice of the Committee of the Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance (the Cadbury Report). However it is the opinion of the Council that not all the provisions of the Cadbury Report are appropriate for a company of the size and structure of The British Board of Film Classification.

## **Transfers to reserves**

The retained profit for the year of £781,673 has been transferred to reserves.

## **Fixed assets**

Information relating to changes in the tangible fixed assets is given in note 8 to the accounts.

## **Donations**

During the year the company made charitable donations totalling £67,574.

## **Auditors**

A resolution to re-appoint Messrs. W.H. Payne & Co. as auditors of the company will be submitted to the annual general meeting.

## **By Order of the Council**

**Robin Duval**

**Secretary**

3 Soho Square,  
London, W1D 3HD

26th February 2003

# Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of the British Board of Film Classification

We have audited the accounts of The British Board of Film Classification for the year ended 31st December 2002 which comprise the Profit and Loss Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the Related Notes numbered 1 to 16. These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out therein.

## **Respective responsibilities of the Members of the Council and auditors**

The Members of Council's responsibilities for preparing the annual report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards are set out in the statement of Members of Council's responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the accounts in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and United Kingdom Auditing Standards.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the accounts give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Council's Report is not consistent with the accounts, if the company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding Members of Council's remuneration and transactions with the company is not disclosed.

We read the Council's Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

## **Basis of opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with United Kingdom Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Members of Council in the preparation of the accounts, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the accounts.

## **Opinion**

In our opinion the accounts give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31st December 2002 and of its profit for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985.

W. H. Payne & Co.  
Chartered Accountants and  
Registered Auditor,  
Sandringham House,  
199 Southwark Bridge Road,  
London, SE1 0HA.

26th February 2003

## Profit and loss account for the year ended 31st December 2002

	Note	2002	2001
<b>Turnover</b>	(2)	<b>5,656,520</b>	4,543,674
Operating costs		<b>(4,291,827)</b>	(3,430,694)
<b>Operating profit</b>		<b>1,364,693</b>	1,112,980
Interest receivable and similar income	(3)	<b>133,831</b>	123,924
Interest payable and similar charges	(4)	<b>(34,500)</b>	(56,000)
Loss on current asset investments:			
- realised		<b>(132,522)</b>	(83,914)
- unrealised		<b>(187,031)</b>	(212,624)
<b>Profit on ordinary activities before taxation</b>	(6)	<b>1,144,471</b>	884,366
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	(7)	<b>(362,798)</b>	(315,830)
<b>Retained profit for year</b>		<b>781,673</b>	568,536
Retained profit at beginning of year		<b>2,596,239</b>	2,027,703
<b>Retained profit at end of year</b>		<b>£3,377,912</b>	£2,596,239

### Continuing operations

None of the company's activities were acquired or discontinued during the above two financial years.

### Total recognised gains and losses

The company has no recognised gains or losses other than the profit or loss for the above two financial years.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this profit and loss account.

# Balance sheet 31st December 2002

	Note	2002	2001
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	(8)	<u>466,326</u>	<u>505,575</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Deferred tax asset	(7)	80,656	-
Debtors	(9)	433,371	301,690
Investments	(10)	1,305,082	1,226,961
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>2,996,665</u>	<u>2,432,932</u>
		<b>4,815,774</b>	<b>3,961,583</b>
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	(11)	<u>(1,202,437)</u>	<u>(1,203,668)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>3,613,337</u>	<u>2,757,915</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<b>4,079,663</b>	<b>3,263,490</b>
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(12)	<u>(678,500)</u>	<u>(644,000)</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u><b>£3,401,163</b></u>	<u><b>£2,619,490</b></u>
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Capital reserve	(13)	23,251	23,251
Profit and loss account		<u>3,377,912</u>	<u>2,596,239</u>
<b>Accumulated funds</b>	(14)	<u><b>£3,401,163</b></u>	<u><b>£2,619,490</b></u>

Approved by the Council of Management on 26th February 2003.

**E. J. Needham - Chairman**

**J. R. Millard - Treasurer**

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this balance sheet.



# Cash flow statement for the year ended 31st December 2002

Reconciliation of operating profit to net cash flow from operating activities	2002	2001
Operating profit	1,364,693	1,112,980
Depreciation charges	262,741	211,988
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(131,079)	76,095
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(99,685)	205,463
<b>Net cash inflow from operating activities</b>	<b>£1,396,670</b>	<b>£1,606,526</b>

Cash flow statement	2002	2001
Net cash inflow from operating activities	1,396,670	1,606,526
Return on investments and servicing of finance (note 15a)	133,229	124,876
Taxation	(345,000)	(195,339)
Capital expenditure (note 15b)	(223,492)	(164,213)
	961,407	1,371,850
Management of liquid resources (note 15c)	(397,674)	(85,228)
<b>Increase in cash</b>	<b>£563,733</b>	<b>£1,286,622</b>

Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in liquid funds (note 15d)	2002	2001
Increase in cash in the year	563,733	1,286,622
Increase/(decrease) in current asset investments	78,121	(211,310)
Change in net liquid funds	641,854	1,075,312
Net liquid funds at beginning of year	3,659,893	2,584,581
<b>Net liquid funds at end of year</b>	<b>£4,301,747</b>	<b>£3,659,893</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this cash flow statement.

# Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2002

## 1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies, which have been consistently applied are:-

### a Basis of accounting

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

### b Tangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at original cost. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write-off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset on a straight line basis over its estimated useful life as follows:-

Movable furniture and equipment	25 per cent per annum
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Computer equipment	33.33 per cent per annum
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Expenditure on leasehold property and immovable furniture and equipment is written off as incurred.

The company has followed the recommendation of Financial Reporting Standard 12 by capitalising as deferred expenditure the anticipated dilapidation costs of its leasehold property. The deferred expenditure is amortised on a straight line basis over the duration of the lease.

### c Current asset investments

Current asset investments are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

### d Taxation

The charge for taxation is based on the profit for the year and takes into account taxation deferred because of timing differences between the treatment of certain items for accounting and taxation purposes.

The accounting policy in respect of deferred tax has been changed this year to reflect the requirements of FRS 19 "Deferred Tax". Provision is made at current rates for tax deferred in respect of all material timing differences. Deferred tax assets are only recognised to the extent that they are regarded as recoverable. The company has not adopted a policy of discounting deferred tax assets and liabilities.

### e Turnover

Turnover comprises the value of sales (excluding VAT) of services supplied in the normal course of business.

### f Leased assets

Rentals applicable to operating leases are recognised in the profit and loss account as incurred.

### g Pensions

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme to provide retirement benefits for its staff. The amount charged to profit and loss account in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable and provided in the year.

# Notes to the accounts (continued) for the year ended 31st December 2002

## 2. Turnover

The turnover and operating profit are attributable to the principal activity of the company.

## 3. Interest receivable and similar income

	2002	2001
Bank deposit interest	95,149	80,046
Income from current asset investments	38,550	43,651
Other income	132	227
	<u>£133,831</u>	<u>£123,924</u>

## 4. Interest payable and similar charges

	2002	2001
Financing element of the provision for short leasehold deferred expenditure (see note 12)	<u>£34,500</u>	<u>£56,000</u>

## 5. Employees

	2002	2001
Average monthly number of people employed by the company during the year:-		
Management	9	9
Administration	11	8
Examination	20	19
Technical	15	13
Accommodation	2	2
Casual	4	4
	<u>61</u>	<u>55</u>

### Costs in respect of these employees:

Salaries	2,040,283	1,818,980
Redundancy	-	27,441
Social security costs	207,068	176,558
Pensions	151,286	103,715
Life assurances	5,228	5,199
	<u>£2,403,865</u>	<u>£2,131,893</u>

### Council of Management remuneration:

No Member of the Council received any remuneration in 2001 or 2002.

# Notes to the accounts (continued) for the year ended 31st December 2002

<b>6. Profit on ordinary activities before taxation</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation is arrived at, after charging:-	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Depreciation and amounts written off fixed assets	<b>262,741</b>	211,988
Auditors' remuneration	<b>21,000</b>	18,000
Rental of equipment	<b>8,547</b>	4,117
Rental of premises	<b>375,000</b>	280,677
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>7. Tax on profit on ordinary activities</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Reconciliation of tax charge to profit:</b>		
Profit on ordinary activities multiplied by standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 30 per cent (2001 - 30 per cent)	<b>(343,341)</b>	(265,310)
<b>Effects of:</b>		
Expenses not deductible for tax purposes	<b>(5,546)</b>	(5,473)
Investment losses not deductible against income	<b>(96,101)</b>	(88,961)
Depreciation in excess of capital allowances	<b>(10,237)</b>	-
Capital allowances in excess of depreciation	-	284
Franked investment income not taxable	<b>6,900</b>	7,138
Other items tax deductible	<b>4,636</b>	487
Indexation allowance	<b>235</b>	-
Marginal relief	-	7,354
Adjustment in respect of prior year	-	28,651
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>(443,454)</b>	(315,830)
Deferred tax asset arising from the interaction of depreciation and capital allowances	<b>80,656</b>	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Tax on profit on ordinary activities</b>	<b>£(362,798)</b>	£(315,830)
	<hr/>	<hr/>



# Notes to the accounts (continued) for the year ended 31st December 2002

## 8. Tangible fixed assets

	Short Leasehold property deferred expenditure	Short Leasehold property	Furniture and equipment	Total
<b>Cost</b>				
At beginning of year	480,000	449,067	2,736,372	3,665,439
Additions	-	11,890	211,602	223,492
Disposals	-	-	(54,502)	(54,502)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At end of year	480,000	460,957	2,893,472	3,834,429
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
At beginning of year	192,001	449,067	2,518,796	3,159,864
Charge for the year	27,429	11,890	223,422	262,741
Disposals	-	-	(54,502)	(54,502)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At end of year	219,430	460,957	2,687,716	3,368,103
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net book value</b>				
At end of year	<u>£260,570</u>	<u>£-</u>	<u>£205,756</u>	<u>£466,326</u>
At beginning of year	<u>£287,999</u>	<u>£-</u>	<u>£217,576</u>	<u>£505,575</u>

## 9. Debtors

	2002	2001
Trade debtors	271,085	136,846
Others	28,016	30,226
Prepayments and accrued income	134,270	134,618
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>£433,371</u>	<u>£301,690</u>

# Notes to the accounts (continued) for the year ended 31st December 2002

<b>10. Current asset investments – listed</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At beginning of year	1,439,585	1,438,271
Additions	566,802	296,593
Disposals	(301,650)	(295,279)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At end of year	1,704,737	1,439,585
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Provision for unrealised loss</b>		
At beginning of year	(212,624)	-
Increase in provision	(187,031)	(212,624)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At end of year	(399,655)	(212,624)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Cost less diminution provision at end of year</b>	<u>£1,305,082</u>	<u>£1,226,961</u>
UK Government securities	283,796	279,732
Other UK investments	1,021,286	947,229
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>£1,305,082</u>	<u>£1,226,961</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Market value of listed investments at end of year</b>	<u>£1,333,317</u>	<u>£1,368,92</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>
Trade creditors	205,075	334,420
Corporation tax	443,207	344,753
Other taxation and social security costs	242,309	220,869
Other creditors	241,671	223,919
Accruals and deferred income	70,175	79,707
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>£1,202,437</u>	<u>£1,203,668</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

# Notes to the accounts (continued) for the year ended 31st December 2002

## 12. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2002 Leasehold property dilapidations	2001 Leasehold property dilapidations
At beginning of year	644,000	588,000
Charged to profit and loss account	34,500	56,000
At end of year	<u>£678,500</u>	<u>£644,000</u>

Leasehold property deferred expenditure provision represents the full estimated cost of dilapidations required under the terms of the lease for the company's business premises and recognised in accordance with the requirement of Financial Reporting Standard 12. The deferred expenditure is amortised on a straight line basis over the duration of the lease. In addition an annual charge is recognised to reflect the financing element of the deferred expenditure provision.

## 13. Capital reserve

	2002	2001
At beginning and end of year	<u>£23,251</u>	<u>£23,251</u>

The capital reserve represents surpluses realised on sales of fixed assets prior to 1984.

## 14. Reconciliation of movements on accumulated funds

	2002	2001
Profit for the financial year after taxation	781,673	568,536
Accumulated funds at beginning of year	<u>2,619,490</u>	<u>2,050,954</u>
Accumulated funds at end of year	<u>£3,401,163</u>	<u>£2,619,490</u>

## 15. Cash flow statement

### (a) Return on investments and servicing of finance

	2002	2001
Interest received	94,547	80,998
Income from current asset investments	38,550	43,651
Other income	<u>132</u>	<u>227</u>
	<u>£133,229</u>	<u>£124,876</u>

### (b) Capital expenditure

Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	<u>£(223,492)</u>	<u>£(164,213)</u>
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# Notes to the accounts (continued) for the year ended 31st December 2002

## 15. Cash flow statement – (continued)

### (c) Management of liquid resources

	2002	2001
Purchase of current asset investments	(566,802)	(296,592)
Sale of current asset investments	169,128	211,364
	<u>£(397,674)</u>	<u>£(85,228)</u>

### (d) Analysis of change in net funds

	At beginning of year	Cash flows	Other non- cash changes	At end of year
Cash at bank and in hand	2,432,932	563,733	-	2,996,665
Current asset investments	1,226,961	397,674	(319,553)	1,305,082
	<u>£3,659,893</u>	<u>£961,407</u>	<u>£(319,553)</u>	<u>£4,301,747</u>

## 16. Guarantees and other financial commitments

### (a) Capital commitments

	2002	2001
At the year end, capital commitments were:		
Contracted for but not provided in the accounts	<u>£35,000</u>	<u>£-</u>

### (b) Operating lease commitments

The minimum annual rental on property held under an operating lease was as follows:-

Lease which expires:	2002	2001
After 5 years	<u>£375,000</u>	<u>£375,000</u>

### (c) Pension arrangements

- (i) The company operates a defined contribution scheme to provide retirement benefits for staff.
- (ii) The total pension charge for the year was £151,286 (2001 - £103,715) including outstanding contributions of £Nil (2001 - £14,477). The pension charge for the year includes a voluntary contribution by the Board of £40,370.



# The Role of the BBFC

The BBFC classifies films, videos and digital media. It does this on behalf of the Local Authorities, who are responsible for cinema licensing and classification, and as the designated authority under the Video Recordings Act.

The BBFC is funded solely from the fees charged for its services.

## Statement of Purpose

- 1** To provide the public with the means to make informed decisions about the films, videos or digital media which they, or those in their care, may wish to view or play.
- 2** To classify works into appropriate categories with regard to relevant legislation and in accordance with the Board's published Classification Guidelines. In doing so, to preserve a proper balance between social responsibility and freedom of expression.
- 3** To provide a reliable and efficient service to the Board's client industries.
- 4** To operate at all times in an independent, fair, consistent and transparent manner.
- 5** To be accessible and responsive to the public and its representatives.
- 6** To ensure a sound financial base for the Board's work and to preserve its independence and integrity.
- ii** To seek at all times, in the implementation of the Guidelines, to ensure that the younger and more vulnerable members of society are protected from harm.
- iii** To monitor closely research into the effects of the media and changes in public opinion; and to participate in relevant research projects.
- iv** To promote clear, effective and efficient working practices, lines of communication and accountability, in all aspects of the Board's work.
- v** To treat all submitting clients fairly and impartially and to promote openness by providing information and advice about Board policy and procedures.
- vi** To continue to improve the quality and efficiency of the Board's performance at all levels through ongoing internal review and early response to developments in the industry and in technology.
- vii** To ensure that the Board is responsive to new requirements for classification services.
- viii** To achieve a high level of courtesy in all forms of communication.
- ix** To keep under review appropriate means of informing audiences about film, video or digital media content and to promote their use.
- x** To explain the Board's function and activities to the public clearly and fully.
- xi** Through the application of equal opportunities and fair employment policies and practices, to develop the Board's staff to their full potential to enable them to secure the aims set out here.

## Aims

The BBFC, additionally, has the following aims:

- i** To ensure that the Classification Guidelines are in line with current legal requirements and contemporary public opinion. To that end, to engage in regular and wide ranging consultation with the public and its representatives, with expert and specialist advisers and with the relevant entertainment industries.



