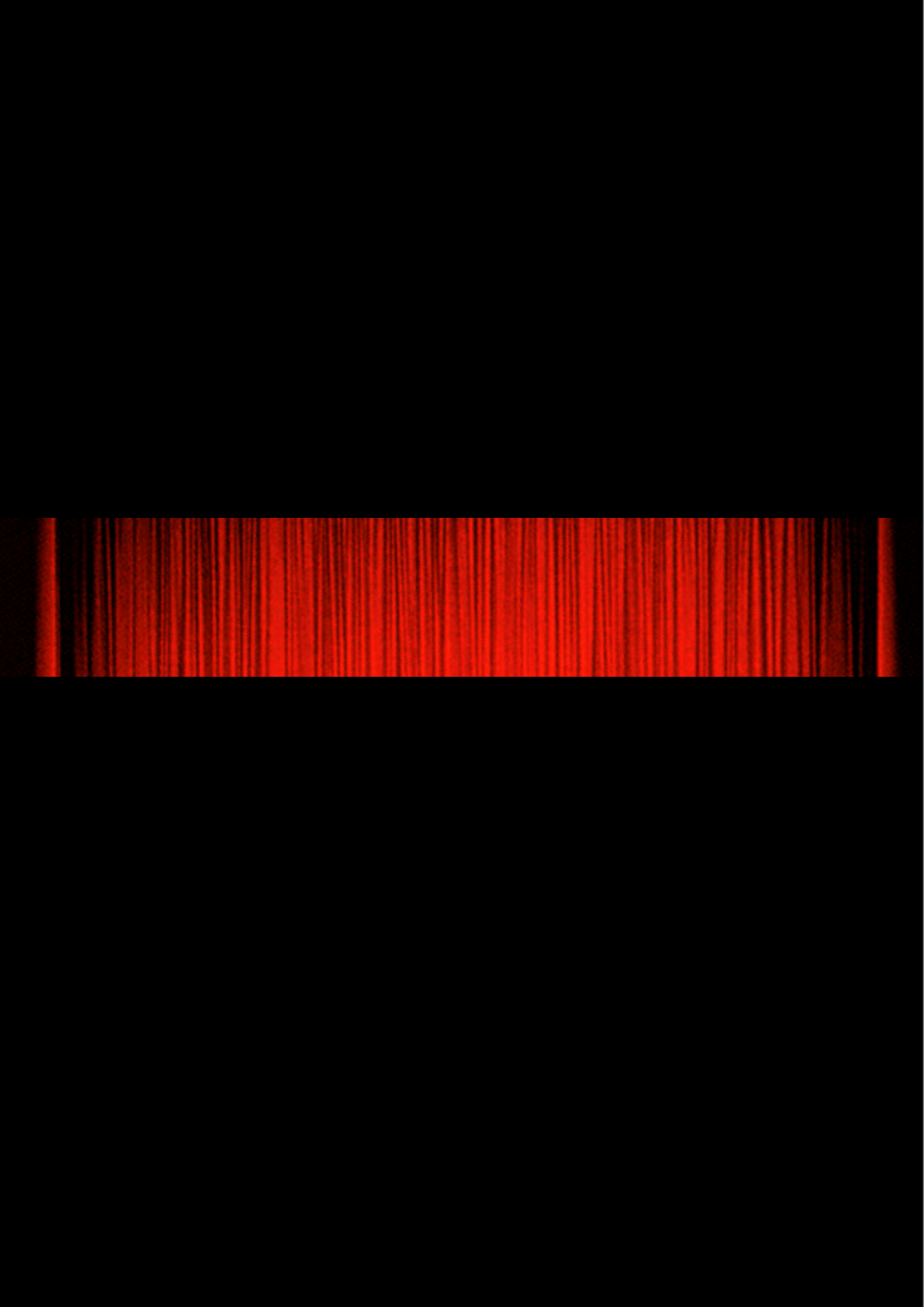




annual report 2000



annual report 2000



President’s Introduction 02

Director’s Report for 2000 04

Accountability 10

New Classification Guidelines 11

Consumer Advice 11

Letters from the Public 12

Media Education 12

Information Technology 15

Client Helpline 17

Enforcement 17

Research 17

Classification 20

Violence 21

Horror 23

Weapons and Imitable Techniques 24

Drugs 25

Animals 26

Language 28

Foreign Language 31

Sexual Violence 34

Sex and Pornography 38

Digital Media 40

Children 40

Video Appeals Committee 42

Consultative Council 44

Advisory Panel on Children’s Viewing 48

Business Review 54

Report of the Council 55

Accounts 58

The Role of the BBFC 68



president's introduction02

Having successfully launched our new Guidelines last autumn, we left over for further consideration whether one of the more junior categories, the '12', should become advisory so far as the cinema is concerned. In other words, the question is whether, subject to the judgement of parents, children below the age of 12 should be able to attend films classified for the 12 to 14 age group. The Board would like to learn whether the public would be in favour.

There are a number of reasons for considering such a change. Either side of 12 years, the maturity of children varies quite widely; parents are the best judges of the degree to which a particular child is sufficiently robust to see material rated one step beyond 'U' and the existing 'PG'. Cinema managers, too, may have more difficulty in policing entry into '12' rated films than any other category. The appearance and size of a young customer can easily mislead as to age. It is also worth noting that the United Kingdom differs from most of Western Europe and North America in retaining a mandatory '12' rating.

In any case the '12' certificate excludes material likely to be harmful to children. At '12' mature themes are acceptable, but their treatment must be suitable for young teenagers. The use of strong language is rare and must be justified by context. Sexual activity may only be implied and sexual references must stay within the bounds set by sex education in schools. Violence must not dwell on detail nor emphasise injuries nor blood. Nor can dangerous fighting techniques contain imitable detail or glamourise the action. So far as horror goes, the gory passages have to be brief. As regards drugs, passing references to and sight of soft drug taking is permitted, but such scenes must be justified by context, be sparing of detail and indicate the dangers.

However some major questions arise. How are parents to learn enough about films classified at '12' to judge whether they are suitable for their children? We believe the means should be 'consumer advice' such as the Board already prepares for publication on the packaging of videos. This briefly indicates the strength of language, sex, violence and any other concern. This information could be incorporated in film advertising, in newspaper and magazine listings and

by way of leaflets or notices in cinema lobbies. To achieve this the Board would need the help of local authorities with their cinema licensing powers and the cooperation of cinema owners and film distributors.

A second question is the issue of accompaniment. Would parents find a 'PG-12' more acceptable if a responsible adult had to be present? Perhaps so, but it is difficult to frame a rule to this effect. Such a requirement would present the difficulties of policing '12' at the cinema doors in a different form. Now the staff would have to assess whether the accompanying person, if not the parent of the child, was truly the responsible person envisaged.

How, though, can the Board learn whether parents would approve of removing the prohibition on entry to '12' rated films by younger children? As an example we have what we did before recently revising our Guidelines as a whole. We carried out general opinion surveys, we commissioned focus groups and we conducted public meetings around the country. Together these soundings gave us confidence to alter our Guidelines and we were rewarded with general acceptance.

This time, though, we have an additional problem. Before going ahead with removing the mandatory element from the '12' rating, we would want to bring about a quid pro quo: this is better access to consumer advice. For the question the Board really wishes to be able to put to parents is whether they would approve a relaxation in the rules provided there was more information available about individual films.

We have already raised these issues with the representative bodies of the local authorities, the exhibitors and the distributors. All have expressed interest. Now we intend to press forward with further consultation and more precise plans. In the end, however, it will be public opinion which will have the decisive say.

Andreas Whittam Smith May 2001



The BBFC is in good health. In terms of workload alone, 2000 was its busiest year yet. Film submissions remain at a high level. But there have been successive increases in the number of video submissions, rising from around 4000 in 1997 to 7,500 in 2000. Last year in particular saw a dramatic 34 per cent rise in submissions on 1999. These increases show little sign of abating in 2001 and offer the clearest evidence that the UK film, video and DVD industry is thriving. That is good news for its regulator.

Efficiency

A number of changes were made during this year of increased pressure on our resources. Their aim was to introduce greater efficiencies, and to make the Board more responsive to the needs of the industry.

The Board's examining staff was restructured into specialist teams, and changes were made to the way in which works are examined and processed. The principle of 'secondary classification' was introduced to allow works, previously classified in a different ratio but otherwise identical, to be processed as simple technical comparisons. Simplifications were made also to the arrangements for inspecting and approving video packaging. Packaging can now be approved quickly and efficiently within the Board with only the more difficult cases referred to the industry-based Video Packaging Review Committee (which retains the right to 'spot check' Board decisions).

There are clear benefits to our customers, in terms of cost and efficiency, in treating the many different elements on a DVD as a single 'video work' as defined by the Video Recordings Act. Rather than classify them all separately as distinct works, each one subject to a minimum fee, related elements (or in theory the entire disc) can now for the first time be classified as one work attracting a lower overall charge. This change also addresses the criticism that the Board's fee structure for DVD 'added-value' material may

in the past have made the provision of such extras financially prohibitive, especially for small distributors. It incidentally has the longer-term effect of reducing the Board's income.

Amongst other improvements in 2000 was the pilot development of an 'extranet' facility to allow clients to monitor the progress of their submissions confidentially. This will be rolled out generally to the industry as it proves itself. The Board hopes to absorb the extra costs involved without any increase in fees or other revenue call.

Accountability

There have also been important developments in public accountability. The year saw the completion of the major consultation process on the Board's new draft Classification Guidelines begun in 1999. (Fuller details of the process are set out in the **Research** section later in the Annual Report.) It involved two Citizens' Juries, a number of public surveys and questionnaires and further 'roadshow' debates. The industry and other interested groups were also consulted. Amongst the principal outcomes was a recognition that the public today is less worried than it used to be about portrayals of sexual activity, particularly in a loving or responsible context. By contrast, it is concerned about levels of violence in the lower classification categories and about the portrayal of drugs. Bad language continues to be a specially sensitive issue.

No other set of guidelines for regulating media content has, so far as I am aware, ever previously been exposed to a similar level of scrutiny. The final version published in September was a genuine and robust reflection of public opinion across the full range of classification categories and related issues of concern.

One of the most significant findings of the consultation was the public’s belief that - unless material is illegal or harmful - adults should be able to make their own viewing choices, with no unnecessary interference by the Board at the ‘18’ level. If the Board has to intervene, it should explain and justify its actions. Accordingly, we make sure now that details of what the BBFC has cut and why in any particular case (and at any classification level) are made available through the Board’s website or on demand.

Cuts

Although we have no hesitation about intervening in any case where there is a breach of the published Guidelines, the necessity for imposing cuts has declined from 5.8 per cent of all works submitted in 1998, to 4.2 per cent in 1999, and to 2.4 per cent last year. During 2000 only one ‘18’ rated cinema film was cut, one cinema film was rejected and only four video works were refused classification outright. Sadly, it is still occasionally necessary to impose cuts at all classification levels for actual cruelty to animals in the making of a film, prohibited by the Cinematograph (Animals) Act. A regular feature of video cuts at ‘18’ and ‘R18’ throughout the year continued to be sexual violence. Concerns about the presentation of children led to cuts in works as diverse as a documentary about naturism, a Japanese manga feature and scenes from the film **Lolita** which had not been included in the original work but which were nevertheless offered last year as DVD ‘extras’. Details are provided in the relevant sections of this Annual Report.

Controversy

A number of decisions which might have been expected to excite a degree of controversy passed with relatively little public or media comment. **A Clockwork Orange**, banned since the 1970s by its director Stanley Kubrick,

was given an uncut ‘18’ video rating. Fears that its violence might invite fashionable youthful emulation had receded with time. Previously censored works such as Pasolini’s **Salo** and the 1975 French film **The Story of O** were also considered now acceptable without Board intervention. Some public concern was expressed about car-stealing in **Gone in 60 Seconds** and its potential for emulation. The Board had taken police advice and established that the film would be of no benefit to a would-be thief. Ironically, one of the bigger controversies of the year arose because of a view that the Board had been censorious in its classification. The ‘15’ rating given to **Billy Elliot** prevented younger children seeing a film they might well have enjoyed thoroughly. The Board’s difficulty was that it contained over 50 uses of the word ‘fuck’ - and the British public has made it abundantly clear that usage of that nature is unacceptable at a lower classification level.

Expertise

In reaching decisions on difficult issues of policy or on particular works, the Board is able to draw upon a variety of consultation resources. Several times a year the Director and Examiners meet with the Consultative Council (formerly Video Consultative Council) and the more recently established Advisory Panel on Children’s Viewing. The latter was set up in 1999 specifically to monitor video classifications with the interests of children in mind. On a more ad hoc basis, the Board also consults a range of expert medical and legal advisors, and draws upon the expertise of the various external agencies and enforcement bodies with whom we enjoy close relationships. During 2000 consultation with the Police, Customs & Excise, the Crown Prosecution Service, Home Office and other interested parties was crucial in the drafting of the new ‘R18’ guidelines for sex videos.

The ‘R18’ Issue

In the High Court in May, the Board lost a Judicial Review of the decision by the Video Appeals Committee (VAC) in 1999 to overturn the rejection of seven sex videos for ‘R18’ classification. The VAC’s conclusion, that the Board had not sufficiently demonstrated harm to children arising from viewing the videos, was found by the Judge to be a reasonable one. Accordingly, the new ‘R18’ Guidelines referred to above were issued in July to allow more explicit videos than had previously been considered acceptable in the licensed sex shop category. One immediate effect of this ruling was an upsurge in such submissions, which rose from 29 in 1999 to 211 submissions in 2000. Though a significant increase, the total was still less than three per cent of all the video works classified by the Board last year. A proportion of these submissions comprised uncut resubmissions of previously cut works, including the 1972 milestone **Deep Throat**. Nevertheless, British standards of acceptability remain stricter than in most of Europe and many works continue to be cut in line with the *new* Guidelines.

‘R18’ Research

One thing clearly spotlighted by the ‘R18’ legal process was the lack of reliable evidence of the potential effects of pornography on children. The Board, therefore, commissioned a research report early in the year which took the views of leading specialists in harm to children. None were in doubt that watching pornography was bad for children, but they were unable to provide any clear evidence of seriously harmful effects arising outside already abusive contexts. It may be, because of the ethical constraints in testing further the potential of pornography to harm children, that more conclusive evidence will be difficult to obtain. In the meantime, the Board is clear that adult material should be kept well away from children. In the summer we argued in our response to the Home

Office’s **Consultation Paper on the Regulation of ‘R18’ Videos** that there should be a *statutory* requirement that the videos be clearly and prominently labelled with an appropriate warning about their contents.

Consumer Advice

That there is a widespread public desire for better information about video and cinema content is not in doubt. An argument for wider availability of consumer advice on all titles and at all classification levels emerged strongly from the 1999-2000 public consultation exercise. There was particular concern about the relative lack of relevant information for cinema films compared to video (which includes consumer advice on the backs of video cassette sleeves). Accordingly the Board started talks during the year with the representatives of theatrical distributors, exhibitors and local government to see what could be done to improve provision of advice to consumers. A number of changes were put in train by the Board itself designed to provide better and more accessible information on the Board’s website and directly to distributors and exhibitors.

In the end, however, everything depends upon the willingness of distributors in particular to dedicate resources to publicising the necessary information - on posters, in billings, to newspapers, in cinema and television advertising and in information provided to individual cinemas. The Board is happy to provide the few lines or words required to explain to the cinema-going public what concerns have led to a film being classified ‘U’, ‘PG’, ‘12’, ‘15’ or ‘18’. Beyond that it must be the responsibility of the industry to make sure the information reaches its customers.

The Future

As I write, a Communications Bill is being drafted. It proposes a single regulator for broadcasting and telecommunications, to be called OFCOM. The BBFC has argued strongly against suggestions that, as the video content regulator which intervenes before works can be released, it should be part of the new body which is otherwise concerned only with *post hoc* content regulation. Nor is it helpful to deconverge the regulation of two elements of the same industry (cinema and video) in order to converge the regulation of two quite different industries (video and broadcast television). The public has clearly signalled that it expects similar standards of acceptability in cinema and video but for different standards to apply to television.

The video industry is booming, partly (but only partly) fuelled by the growth of DVD. The pace of convergence between the movie industry and the Internet will in fact be set by Hollywood which will judge when the time is ripe for the new digital media to be the main platform for delivery of its product. So long as well over half of Hollywood's revenue derives from video and DVD, that time may be some distance in the future. Seasoned observers will have noticed the efficiency with which the entertainment industry's leaders (broadly the same companies for music as for movies) have hobbled Napster, scour.com, MP3.com, and other sites which have appeared to threaten their traditional hegemony.

In the meantime, the BBFC is also able to provide the movie industry with a dedicated, small, self-regulatory body. The service it offers is increasingly fast-moving, efficient and flexible. It is a one-stop shop for cinema, video, DVD. Transferring these functions to a large, broadcast-led organisation would bring disbenefits to a thriving industry in terms of delay and disruption, loss of focus and inefficiency.

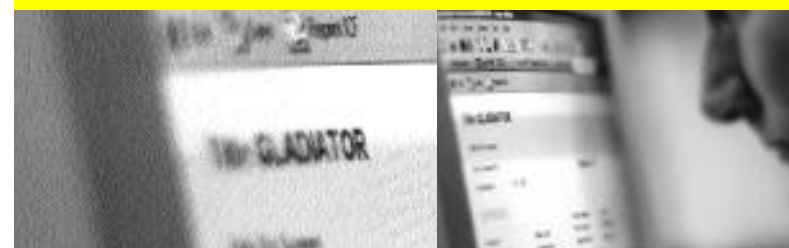
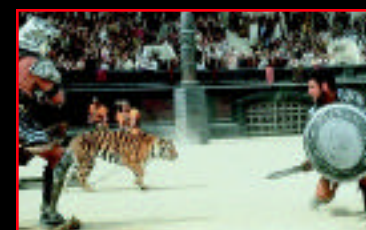
It makes more sense for any necessary cooperative arrangements between the BBFC and OFCOM to be put in place without undermining current achievement. The BBFC would be happy to reach a formal understanding with OFCOM to ensure that both organisations work within broadly the same principles and objectives. This would ensure the consistency of approach which is rightly central to the government's present concerns. The BBFC would still be able to respond directly and immediately to public expectations and industry demands.

I also hope it may become possible eventually for the BBFC to develop a closer commercial relationship with the broadcast sector. As niche movie channels and website broadcasters do begin to fulfil their promise, they will need to know when to schedule their movies and what ratings-related advice to give consumers. The BBFC is in a position to provide this at what would be a marginal cost alongside its mainstream activity.

The current strength of the Board derives from the very high quality of its staff, including its cadre of full-time professional Examiners. But it owes a great deal also to the guidance and advice, particularly in financial and administrative matters, of its Council of Management led by Brian Smith. I owe a very personal debt too to the Presidential Team – Andreas Whittam Smith and the two Vice Presidents Janet Lewis-Jones and Lord Taylor of Warwick – upon whose wisdom I have relied on many occasions during the past year.



Robin Duval





New Classification Guidelines

The year 2000 saw the publication of a new set of Classification Guidelines in September – only the second in the history of the Board. These were the result of extensive public and industry consultation and research, which is detailed elsewhere in this report. However, the starting point for the process was the public meetings held around the country, continuing on from those which had taken place in 1999. The last of these events took place early in the year. Birmingham and Manchester were visited to extend the geographical spread and a repeat event was held in London specifically for the people who were unable to get tickets for the London presentation in October 1999. They followed the same pattern of a presentation followed by audience discussion as the previous series and provided the Board with valuable views which were considered during the drawing up of the new Guidelines.

The Guidelines are available both on the Board's website and in hard copy format along with a summary of the research which underpins them, entitled ***Sense & Sensibilities***. Copies of both publications were sent to everyone who had written in to the Board with their views or had taken part in the two Citizens' Juries. A press launch was held at which the President and the Director explained the new Guidelines to national and specialist press. The story appeared in all of the national newspapers and the President and Director were interviewed for television and radio news broadcasts. In addition the regional press carried the story.

For information about the changes to the 'R18' Guidelines see the section on the Video Appeals Committee.

Consumer Advice

One of the stronger messages expressed by the Board's Citizens' Juries was a desire for more information about the content of films, to enable potential viewers to make educated choices. The Board already provides such 'Consumer Advice' for every film and video passed, but its display is the responsibility of the film and video industry. As stated in its new Guidelines, the Board strongly supports initiatives both to make Consumer Advice more widely available and to publicise its existence.

To this end, 2000 saw improvements in the Board's basic format for Consumer Advice. In March, video advice was made more comprehensive, and in September, cinema advice was shortened, to assist in facilitating its display, for instance on advertising sites. Changes to the Board's website were also put in train to draw attention to Consumer Advice.

Parents told the Board that Consumer Advice is particularly needed when considering 'PG' rated films which have a natural appeal to small children. In 2000, both ***Dinosaur*** and ***The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas*** were good examples of this – the first was passed 'PG' for some scenes which might frighten young children, whereas the second, by contrast, contained some mild bad language and sexual innuendo.

Many other films, released in 2000, demonstrated the potential value of accessible Cinema Consumer Advice. Even some 'U' rated films contained issues parents may wish for advance notice of, like the occasional very mild bad language in ***Chicken Run*** and mild horror in ***The Little Vampire***. The Board's Consumer Advice also explained that ***Billy Elliot*** was classified '15' solely because of frequent strong language. In the higher categories, Consumer Advice can inform adults and teenagers about content which they may personally find problematic.

The Board will continue to promote debate, and preferably practical action, within the industry, to get Consumer Advice out to the viewing public.

Letters from the Public

Compared with other content regulators, the Board receives relatively few letters. It treats all correspondence, nevertheless, very seriously. The great majority of contact from the public now comes via the email facility on the Board's website, but some people still choose pen and paper over email and mouse. *A Clockwork Orange* excited renewed concern when it came out on video at the beginning of the year with 17 people writing in to say it should not have been given a classification. The decision at the end of the year to allow the sight of chainsticks in Bruce Lee films will hopefully mean that in next year's report we will be able to record for the first time a nil return from aggrieved fans. In the meantime, in addition to the numerous emails, six people put pen to paper to ask when they would be able to see the uncut versions of his films. (Many were passed uncut during the course of the year.)

The level and amount of bad language in *Billy Elliot* was controversial. A letter to The Independent argued that the '15' rating was too high, but by contrast, a letter to the Board suggested that '15' was too low and the language should have made it an '18'. Concern about language was also the basis for complaints about *Chicken Run*, *101 Dalmatians*, *Madeline*, *Enemy of the State*, *The Beach*, *Watership Down*, *The Blair Witch Project* and the trailer for *Ordinary Decent Criminal*.

Knowing what will frighten one child whilst leaving another squealing with glee is a perennial problem for the Board's Examiners. Two people wrote to complain that *My Dog Skip* was too distressing for a 'U' certificate, one person complained about the cruel treatment of the chickens in

the animated feature *Chicken Run*, and the video of *Watership Down* continues to generate occasional letters suggesting it is too distressing for children. Other titles which were criticised for being too violent or distressing for their 'U' or 'PG' categories were *Father Christmas*, *Babe - Pig in the City*, *Scooby Doo on Zombie Island*, *Animal Farm*, *All Dogs go to Heaven*, *The Little Vampire* and *The Iron Giant*.

One letter highlighted the differences in attitudes between the UK and Europe. The Board classified *American Beauty* '18' and received a letter suggesting it should in fact have been banned. In France the film was given the equivalent of a 'U'.

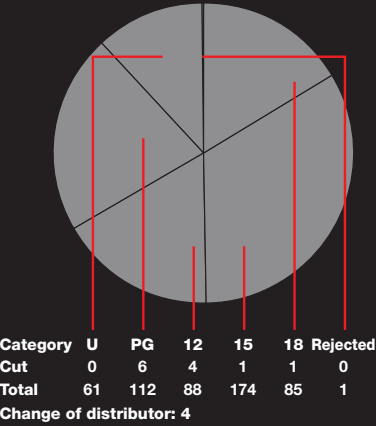
The changes to the 'R18' Guidelines generated two letters expressing views opposed to their more relaxed standards and nine people wrote to say that they wanted more explicit pornography.

Media Education

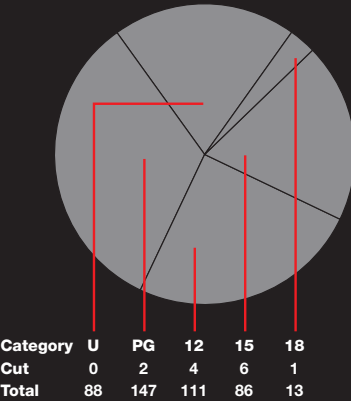
With the proliferation of media courses in schools, colleges and universities across the country, requests for Examiners to give presentations to children, students and teachers are a constant feature of the Board's educational programme. They allow the Board's team of Examiners to test ideas and get the reactions and opinions of the younger members of the cinema-going public.

This year saw the formation of a team of Examiners with special responsibility for monitoring media education. This resulted in better co-ordination of effort to meet the demand for speakers and enabled the Board to supplement the work of Film Education and the British Film Institute. Examiners were involved on a number of fronts, from speaking at universities in Scotland, Wales and all over England to undergraduate and postgraduate

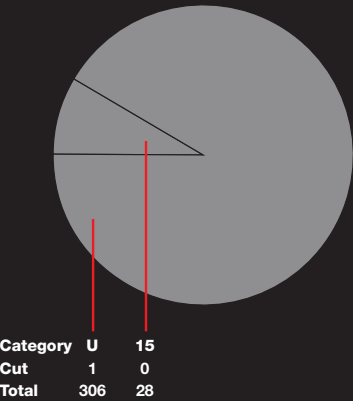
Film
Total – 525



Film Trailers
Total – 445

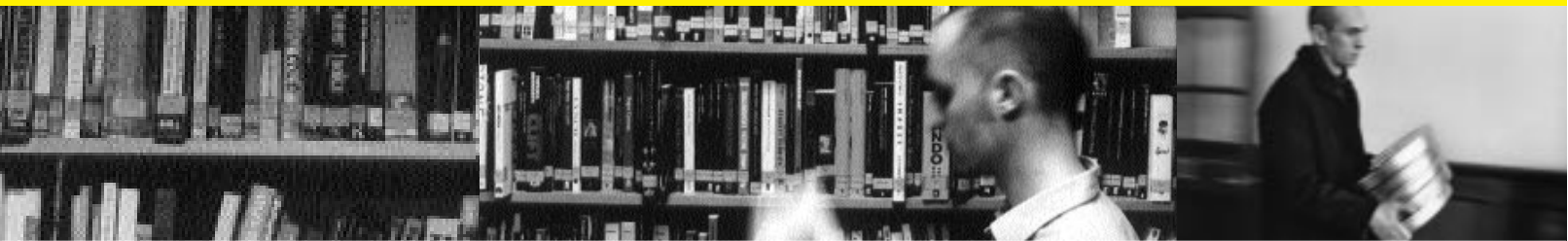
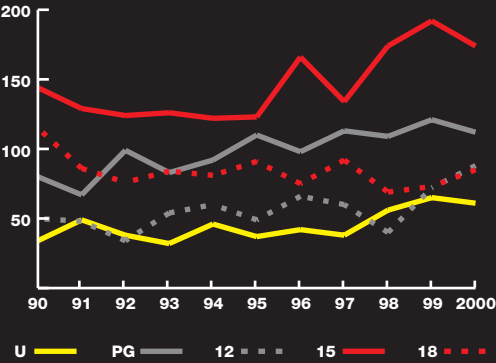


Film Advertisements
Total – 334



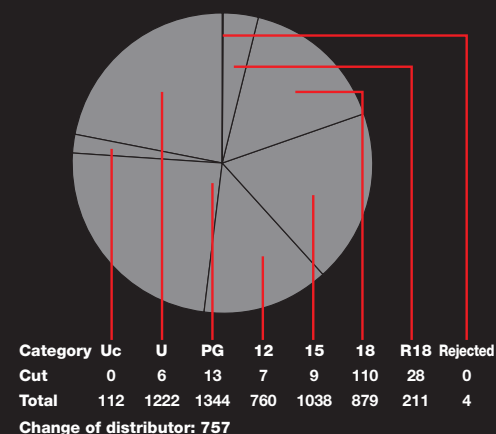
Film Statistics

	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	2000
U	34	49	38	32	46	37	42	38	56	65	61
PG	80	67	99	83	92	110	98	113	109	121	112
12	50	48	34	54	60	49	66	60	40	72	88
15	144	129	124	126	122	123	166	134	174	192	174
18	115	86	76	84	81	91	75	92	69	73	85

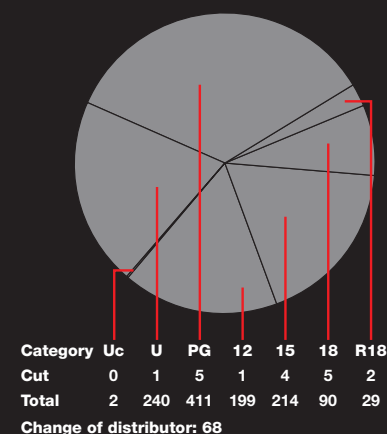


The percentage of films and videos cut continues to fall. Only 2.3 per cent of cinema films were cut in 2000, the majority of which were cut to get a lower category.

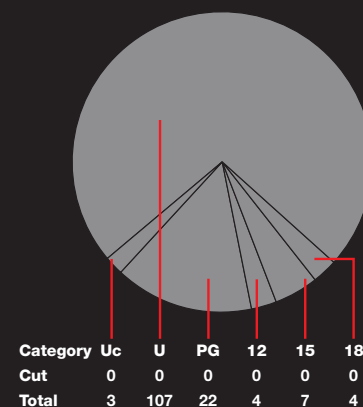
Video Total – 6327



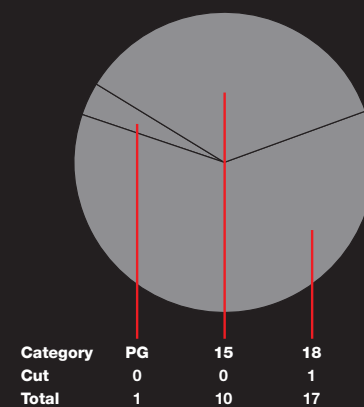
Video Trailers Total – 1253



Video Advertisements Total – 147



Digital Media Total – 28



students, to working on a media initiative with a Nottingham primary school, as well as travelling country-wide to secondary schools (including a Special school) and colleges. Adult audiences were equally eager to listen to Examiners at in-service training events, conferences and film festivals from Cambridge to Bath, and Greenwich to Derby. Much of the focus of those events was the new BBFC Guidelines, with Examiners explaining the extensive consultation process and discussing the outcomes which were illustrated by clips from relevant films.

Examiners were also in demand for interviews. These sometimes entailed student groups recording question and answer sessions for their degree assignments, or interviews with local and networked radio and TV programmes, or magazines, about aspects of Board policy and contentious issues.

The annual National Schools Film Week, run by Film Education, gave Examiners the opportunity to reach young audiences and present screenings at cinemas across the UK. Similar events were also mounted by individual Examiners in areas where independent cinemas offered venues for young people to attend BBFC – led presentations. A substantial number of young people attended discussions, seminars at the Board and screenings, covering significant issues of policy and precedent, category and classification.

These events enable Examiners to tap into the groundswell of opinion in a group which was largely *outside* the sampling of the public consultation process. Children and young people have expressed their appreciation of the fact that BBFC staff are accessible and interested in their views, and feel that they have a forum for their comments and criticisms. In the light of their specialist knowledge,

Examiners have also been able to provide contributions to a variety of publications, such as packs compiled by the English and Media Centre, and materials for classroom use in schools.

Information Technology

The pace of change in information technology has continued to be embraced by the BBFC with several exciting new developments over the past year.

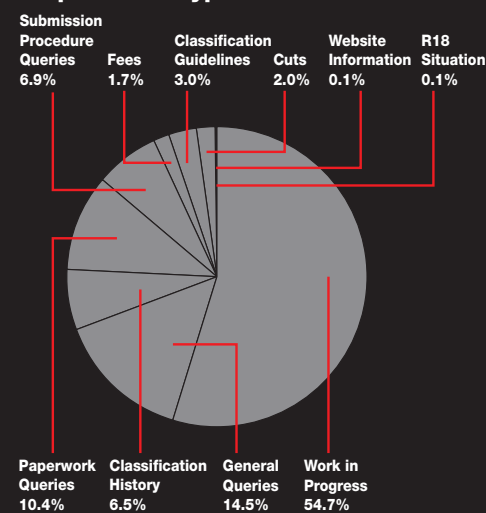
The website @ <http://www.bbfc.co.uk> has received an increasing number of hits over the past year, up more than 50 per cent on the previous year. The site has continued to evolve and has undergone a substantial redesign to further improve the quality of information.

Our sampling of the comment and links on other sites shows a very clear swing of opinion from negative to positive over the past year. The combination of the BBFC's greater willingness to explain decisions and the speed and reliability of our website has changed the perception of the Internet communities greatly. Indeed, it is now unusual to find a very negative opinion about the Board's work and user website ratings now regularly give us very high marks.

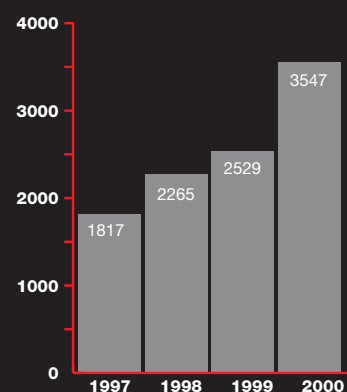
We have paid particular attention to the needs of our industry customers, providing them with much more carefully targeted information. A study of the usage patterns and anecdotal evidence shows us that the majority of our regular website visitors are far from the media stereotype of 'anoraks in attics'. They are business users looking to gain market intelligence. We are acutely aware of the need to avoid the "World Wide Wait" and have designed the website very much with speed of access to the fore. Our site uses very compact graphics and avoids media clips and similar bandwidth hogs. We have also doubled the line speed of our leased line to support increasing demands for Internet access.

Only 2.7 per cent of videos were cut with cuts to '18' videos down to an all time low of 12.5 per cent.

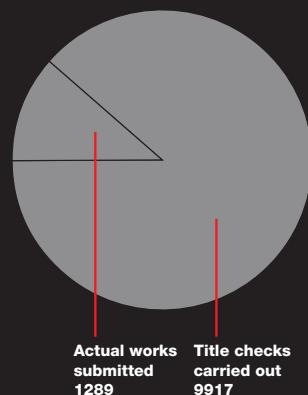
Helpline Call Types 2000



Number of Client Helpline Calls



Enforcement



Works Requiring Evidence 1988-2000



The line speed improvement was achieved at no additional cost by changing the service provider. The new company has been able to provide a more reliable service and this, together with other measures, has enabled us to improve the core systems reliability to better than 99.95 per cent.

With reliability of our core systems so high, the focus is now moving towards improving the reliability and availability of user systems, individual PCs and printers.

A pilot scheme is underway providing a secure business-to-business Extranet. This is enabling our industry customers to track progress of their work through the classification process. We believe this to be unique among regulators and expect a rapid adoption of this by our customers when the system is ready to be fully rolled out.

On a negative note the world of information technology continues to be plagued with computer viruses and other electronic threats. We detect viruses in incoming email at an average rate of around one a month. Though no virus has yet caused us a problem it remains depressingly common for other organisations to take few or no precautions against these threats.

As forecast in last year's Annual Report the telephone system has been converted to an integrated digital system. This has resolved issues that the old system could not address and provided us with a solid basis upon which to build. The provision of voice mail and call routing has improved the service we are able to provide to our customers and the public. We expect to make greater use of the technology as the convergence between information technology and telephony continues.

Client Helpline

The Client Helpline continues to provide a one-stop information service to the Board's industry customers. In 2000, 3547 enquiries were received. This represents a 40 per cent call volume increase on 1999's figure of 2529.

In order to provide a 24 hour service to the industry, a voicemail facility has been added to the helpline.

Enforcement

The Board continues to assist the police and trading standards officers in their action against unclassified videos. Almost 11,000 items were submitted for research and technical comparison in 2000, continuing the upward trend of the past four years. Actual works submitted amounted to 1289 with 9917 title checks carried out. DVD has proved as popular with the counterfeiters as with the public and, with this delivery format expected to increase its share of the home entertainment market, the volume of works submitted by enforcement agencies looks set to rise accordingly.

Research

In 1999/2000 the Board undertook the largest public consultation exercise in its history. The aim was to provide evidence of attitudes towards the classification of films and videos in the UK. A series of research projects formed a key part of this initiative, providing an objective basis for the drafting of the new BBFC Guidelines.

As recorded in the last BBFC Annual Report, the Board initiated the consultation exercise with a series of roadshows around the country. Participants were presented with a copy of a draft set of Guidelines, and asked for feedback. A total of 816 members of the public and media industry representatives submitted completed questionnaires for consideration. A version of the

questionnaire and the draft Guidelines also appeared on the BBFC website, which generated a further 1011 responses. It was felt, however, that – though a valuable indication of sectors of opinion – both of these samples were self selecting and therefore potentially unrepresentative of the full range of the public’s views. A nationally representative sample was also surveyed to augment the findings of the earlier questionnaires (described below as the national survey sample). A total of 1249 randomly selected respondents participated from all regions in the UK.

In addition, two Citizens’ Juries (totalling 28 participants) were convened, in order to add some flesh to the bare bones of the quantitative surveys. They were held in February/March 2000 at locations in Portsmouth and Birmingham. A randomised quota sample was drawn to reflect the local populations in these areas. The juries sat for four days, during which time they heard evidence, from a range of experts, on the classification process and wider cultural and philosophical debates.

They also watched illustrative film clips and were encouraged to engage critically with the material. The juries concluded with a summing up session in which they presented their assessment of the classification system to senior representatives of the Board. The research findings for all of these projects have been aggregated, and the main results are discussed below. Full details of the methods and findings of the Citizens’ Juries and questionnaire survey can be found in ***Sense & Sensibilities: Public Opinion and the BBFC Guidelines*** which is available in hard copy from the Board, or as a downloadable file (www.bbfc.co.uk).

In the area of bad language, the research found that the majority (56 per cent) of the national survey sample agreed that “young people use bad language because of what they hear in films and videos”. Nearly half (48 per cent) of

the national survey sample thought that the language guidelines were “about right”. Both sets of juries were concerned about bad language, especially in the junior categories. There was some concern about the use of “very strong language” at ‘15’.

The public appear to be more accepting of sexually explicit material aimed at adults, but less comfortable with violence in the junior categories. Nearly half (46 per cent) of the national survey sample agreed that “people over 18 have a right to see graphic portrayals of real sex in films and videos”. The majority (54 per cent) of the national survey sample thought that the guidelines for sex were “about right”, although nearly a third (32 per cent) thought they were not strict enough. Half of the national survey sample thought that the violence guidelines were “about right”, although a sizeable minority (42 per cent) thought they were not strict enough. Both juries felt that some relaxation in sex guidelines was possible, especially at ‘15’ and ‘18’.

The issue of drug use in films proved to be of most concern to those questioned. The portrayal of drug use was considered far more offensive than every other classification issue (including sex and violence), despite the fact that 52 per cent of the national survey sample agreed that “films should be allowed to portray drug use in a realistic manner”. The majority (47 per cent) of those questioned in the survey felt that the guidelines on drugs were not strict enough, even at ‘15’ and ‘18’. It was in view of the strong feelings held by many members of the public in this area that the Board commissioned research alongside the Health Education Authority (HEA) and the Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC), to look into attitudes towards the portrayal of drug use in the media. The research (published under the title ***Knowing the Score: The depiction of illegal drugs in broadcast media and film*** by the BSC) involved qualitative interviews with drug users and nonusers, a range of

professionals who work with people with drug dependency problems, and a selection of representatives from the media. Most respondents agreed that the portrayal of drug use should not glamourise the activity. However, just as the national survey found, most of those interviewed felt that drug use should be portrayed realistically provided that it was not shown to be a normal or risk free activity. Respondents were clear that portrayals which overemphasised the negative aspects of drug taking were in danger of losing credibility with those sections of the audience who take drugs or know users. A more balanced and rounded approach to the portrayal of drug use, which presented the highs and lows of the activity, was felt to offer the best way forward.

The theme of sex was also covered in the 1999 British Social Attitudes Survey. The BBFC co-sponsored a module looking at public attitudes towards the portrayal of sex in the media. Over one thousand people over the age of 16 participated in the survey, run by the National Centre for Social Research. The survey (***Sex and the media: a shifting landscape in British Social Attitudes 17th Report***) found that the public takes a more relaxed attitude towards the portrayal of sex in the media than it did five years ago. The findings show that the public is more tolerant of sexual depictions on film and on video, provided they are justified by the story line. Even in the case of pornography, where the BBFC liberalised its ‘R18’ Guidelines as a result of a High Court ruling, the majority of those questioned felt that adults have the right to see explicit sex if they so choose.

During revision of the ‘R18’ Guidelines which restrict the most sexually explicit material to licensed sex shops, the Board undertook an additional piece of research intended to investigate the extent to which professionals concerned with child welfare (in this case psychologists, psychiatrists, paediatricians, social workers and teachers) had evidence

of the harmful impact of pornography on children. The study (entitled ***‘R18’ Pornography: Are experts in a position to say that children are harmed if they view ‘R18’ videos?***) was based on interviews with 38 professionals currently working with children. They were asked to supply evidence of harm to children caused by pornography. The majority of those interviewed felt that viewing pornography could be harmful to children, and that they should be protected from it. However, evidence of specific cases where a child had been harmed by pornography was harder to come by. It was recognised that separating the effects of pornography from other deleterious features of a child’s situation is very difficult, especially as the majority of those children exposed to pornography are usually the victims of other forms of harmful abuse. This vulnerable group was believed to be most at risk from the harmful effects of pornography. A copy of the full report is available from the BBFC.

Towards the end of 2000, the BBFC teamed up with the BSC and Independent Television Commission to fund a project of mutual interest, examining the phenomenon of professional wrestling on TV and video. The research, conducted by Cragg Ross Dawson, involved interviews with eighty people aged between 6 and over 55, some of whom professed to be wrestling fans while others described themselves as casual viewers. The study was designed to examine the pleasures associated with professional wrestling, and to discover how audience members interpret this form of sports entertainment. The project was prompted by a desire to understand better audience relationships with the material which has become more adult in its depiction of violence and sexuality in recent years despite its popularity with audiences of all ages. The study was due for publication in February 2001, and will be reported in detail in the next Annual Report.



Violence

The issue of violence in films and videos remained at the centre of many discussions in the Board throughout the year 2000, despite the trend away from the violent and bloody Hollywood blockbuster – for the time being at least. That being said, Hollywood still created updated big budget versions of former small screen series such as ***Shaft***, ***X-Men***, ***Charlie's Angels*** and the sequel to ***Mission Impossible***, with classifications which reflected their violent content. Elsewhere, the treatment of violence in films such as the epic period piece ***Gladiator***, the third and final part of the ***Scream*** series and ***American Psycho***, ensured that all were closely scrutinised by the Board's Examiners and awarded appropriate classifications.

Closer to home, there were further variations on the British gangster-theme movie. The follow-up to the film believed to have started the trend (***Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*** in 1998) was ***Snatch*** which was released in September. This proved to be the most successful by far of the genre although its weighty comic book violence secured it an '18' uncut. Other offerings such as ***Essex Boys***, ***Gangster No.1***, ***Circus and Love***, ***Honour & Obey*** were all rated '18' but they fared less well at the box office, suggesting that the movie-going public have lost their taste for this kind of violence.

Whilst no videos or films were wholly rejected by the Board because of their violent content in 2000, concerns were expressed by Examiners about two of the many wrestling tapes that were submitted. The examination of videos and DVDs for use in the home is carried out with strict adherence to the Video Recordings Act which requires the Board to consider whether a work may be harmful to potential viewers or, through their behaviour, to society. In the case of ***Living Dangerously 2000***, a male wrestler was seen butting the stomach of a woman held in the ring as part of a scenario in which the woman was

verbally and physically humiliated as the audience, including her young son, looked on. The Board found the realistic depiction and celebration of abusive behaviour unacceptable and required the distributors to make a cut. A cut was also required to limit the potential for sadistic pleasure in a sequence in the wrestling video, ***Barely Legal '97***, in which a bloodied wrestler was repeatedly kicked by his opponent in close-up detail.

These two works along with ***The Exterminator*** (see below) were the only three videos subjected to compulsory cuts for violence by the Board in 2000.

With the take-off in popularity of DVD as the format of the future for home-viewed products, many older works were resubmitted on disc. Violence featured as a classification issue on a number of occasions and some continued to require cuts. John Woo's Hong Kong action thriller, ***Hard Boiled***, had been passed '18' with cuts on film and video in 1993 and 1994. Six years later, however, elements of violence previously cut were found to be acceptable under present-day guidelines, lacking as they did any "detailed portrayal of violent or dangerous acts which is likely to promote the activity". ***The Basketball Diaries*** contained a slow motion dream sequence in which Leonardo DiCaprio entered a classroom and sprayed his teacher and classmates with bullets. Following the Dunblane tragedy in 1996 the distributor had replaced the previously classified uncut version with one which omitted that sequence. When the 1999 Columbine High School shooting raised concerns about screen violence of a similar nature, this also became a matter of concern for the BBFC. However, no evidence has ever been presented to indicate that the Columbine attack was provoked or induced by viewing ***The Basketball Diaries***. Resubmitted in uncut form in 2000, a fresh look at the work by new teams of Examiners led to it being granted an '18' certificate without cuts. The Board took the view that the work's strong anti-drug



BBFC Examiners work in teams to view works.

stance helped neutralise any significant concerns connected to the fleeting dream sequence, which, in the context of the film, was a product of the central character's drug-induced distorted sense of reality. By contrast, the early 1980's American revenge thriller, ***The Exterminator***, fared less well on its most recent visit to the BBFC with cuts still being required to limit prolonged and detailed scenes of violence and sexual violence in accordance with the requirements of the Video Recordings Act and the Board's Classification Guidelines.

Amongst works cut to achieve the requested category, ***Romeo Must Die*** stood out as an example of the degree of screen violence that could be contained within the '18' category, but was too strong at '15'. To achieve the '15' classification category requested by the distributor, detailed depictions of violence were removed. These included sights of bloodletting as a man was shot in the knee and another shot in the chest, martial arts-style impact blows involving a throat punch and a kick to the back of a man's head and sight of a head butt and a number of kidney punches. In all, however, only three videos were subject to "category cuts" for violence in 2000. For the great majority, the violence was classified at the appropriate level without further intervention by the Board.

The BBFC's new Guidelines reflect the public's desire for the Board to continue to take the issue of violence in all films and videos seriously, especially in works aimed at younger audiences. While violence has been a feature of both children's and adult entertainment for many years, the BBFC remains confident that the degree and nature of it in any given work can be successfully contained within the classification system. However, cuts may still be required in extreme cases, as seen in the handful of examples listed in this report.

Horror

The year provided an interesting selection of films that could broadly be labelled 'horror', with classification certificates ranging from 'U' through to '18'.

Based on a series of popular children's novels, ***The Little Vampire***, a live-action tale of a young American boy befriended by the youngest son of a family of benign vampires, was granted a 'U' certificate for film and video release, rather than 'PG', even though it contained some mildly scary horror moments. The Board felt that these were acceptable at 'U' as they were sufficiently counterbalanced by the film's reassuringly sensitive treatment of its horror theme. However, Disney's ***Dinosaur***, which featured state-of-the-art computer-generated images, was awarded a 'PG' certificate as it was felt that the intensity of some of the stronger moments of threat and horror had the potential to frighten younger or less robust children.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer is a popular TV and video series aimed predominantly at a teenage market. It is sometimes pre-cut for early evening terrestrial television time slots, and one video episode, ***Dead Man's Party***, required cuts to strong violent detail and an imitable technique before it could be granted the '12' certificate its theme and treatment merited. Similarly, ***Xena: Warrior Princess - The Black Wolf***, an episode from another popular TV and video series sometimes pre-cut prior to broadcast, required a cut to remove a potentially harmful and imitable double ear-clap before the work could be granted a '12' certificate.

Two of the year's most popular horror films aimed at a younger audience had a comic book flavour, and were passed '12' uncut. The live-action science-fiction adaptation ***X-Men***, contained frequent fantastical comic-strip violence, whereas ***Unbreakable*** contained a

thematically strong idea of a killer's murderous activities being ultimately thwarted by the film's undamageable hero. The treatment was generally discreet but the film contained sufficient moderate horror and violence to justify its rating. However, ***Battlefield Earth*** required a cut to a head butt in both the feature and trailer before both could be classified '12', rather than '15', for film and video release.

One of 2000's most popular horror films, the supernatural thriller ***Final Destination***, contained strong scenes of horror in a supernatural context, along with strong language, and was therefore classified '15' uncut on film and video. ***Cherry Falls***, another '15' rated horror film with a high-school setting, was felt to lie at the upper limits of the category because of its treatment of violence, horror, strong language and sexual references. When it came to the video release, it was felt that there was a greater risk of underage viewing in a less controlled domestic environment, so the category was raised to '18'. Yet another high-school horror film, ***Urban Legends – Final Cut***, contained some strong horror and language, and was passed '15' for film and video release. However, a cut was required to the theatrical trailer before it could be passed '15', as it featured an uncontextualised sexual reference. In making that judgement, the Board took note of the fact that trailers are unbidden and viewers less prepared therefore for their content.

American Psycho, an adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis' notorious early 1990s novel, played down the book's overt and graphic horror in favour of a satirical treatment of its descriptions of excess. It was classified '18' uncut for film and video release for strong depictions of sex, violence, language and drug use. An updated variation on the 'Invisible Man' theme, ***Hollow Man*** was classified '18' for film and video on the grounds of strong horror, violence and language. The film's difficult theme of sexual violence prevented the Board recommending cuts to render the

work suitable for a '15' certificate as requested by the film's UK distributors. ***The Cell***, a fantastical serial killer tale, was passed '18' uncut on film for strong horror and violence. Meanwhile, genre parody ***Scary Movie*** was classified '18' uncut for theatrical and video release for frequent coarse sex references.

Continuing 1999's video submission trend, the Board received a number of titles previously included on the Director of Public Prosecutions' (DPP) list of so-called 'video nasties' in the early 1980s. Three of these titles, ***Blood Feast***, ***The Toolbox Murders*** and ***The House by the Cemetery*** required cuts for '18' to remove the kind of sadistic excesses which drew the attentions of the prosecutors several years ago, while ***Cannibal Ferox***, which was submitted in a pre-cut version, required further cuts to remove sight of animal cruelty before it could be classified '18'.

Distributors still seem keen to release older titles which influenced the contemporary horror scene. Following the Board's 1999 decision to classify ***The Exorcist*** uncut, ***The Director's Cut*** version was submitted, containing additional dialogue and special effects scenes. It raised no further classification issues for film or video release and was passed '18' uncut. Both ***The Wizard of Gore*** and ***The Gruesome Twosome***, which lacked the power to disturb today's viewers, were passed '18' uncut for video release.

Weapons and Imitable Techniques

The BBFC's policy of withholding from young viewers glamorous and seductive images of weaponry, particularly those implements most commonly implicated in juvenile crime, was reinforced in the new classification Guidelines which came into force in September. Fans of martial arts films will be particularly pleased to see that chainsticks and throwing stars are now dealt with by appropriate classification rather than by cutting. The Board, is however,

increasingly cautious about the depiction of knives, given current social concerns about their easy availability, the ease with which they can be concealed and the increasing frequency of their use by the young.

More challenging has been the issue of imitable techniques, in particular those combat techniques that are potentially dangerous and liable to cause significant injury to both perpetrator and victim, but which look deceptively easy to employ. The head butt and the double ear-clap remain paramount concerns. Head butts accounted for cuts in seven features, and double ear-claps for cuts in six. Neck-breaks, while not so easily imitable, were cut from three features where they appeared to be particularly explicit.

A variety of other concerns presented themselves. A children's cartoon, ***O Christmas Tree***, in which one of the characters uses a pair of scissors to cut through a power cable attached to a Christmas tree required a precautionary cut to ensure a 'U' classification, and to ensure that a potentially hazardous activity was not seen by an impressionable audience. Higher up the age range, a video feature, ***The Adventures of Sebastian Cole*** contained a sequence in which a teenage boy demonstrates to a young friend how to inhale propellant gas from a pressurised canister of cream. The incident was cut for '15' as Board Guidelines rule that no instructional detail of substance abuse is acceptable. Visuals giving instructional details of the preparation of a petrol bomb were removed from a video feature ***The Offspring - Americana*** under the Amendment to the 1984 Video Recordings Act, which requires the Board to have special regard to the potential harm caused by the depiction of criminal behaviour. One area where the Board sought professional advice was in the matter of the representation of thieves breaking into cars. The feature ***Gone in 60 Seconds*** contained such scenes and was shown to

police officers with special expertise in car crime. Their view was that the particular sequences in question were not likely to provide helpful information to encourage car theft, and the film was released without cuts. However, a sequence in which a car was hot-wired in an episode of the popular series ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer*** was judged to be unacceptable because of the risk of imitation and cut.

The Board will continue to seek the best advice available where there are concerns about imitation of criminal or dangerous acts. It is not always possible to predict what young children will choose to emulate from their viewing material, so special care is exercised in the junior categories.

Drugs

Drugs continued to feature in the films and videos classified throughout 2000. However, with one or two notable exceptions, the substance itself rarely formed the central narrative device of any film, its inclusion often being employed solely to denote the personality traits of a particular character or set of characters. There would certainly appear to have been a shift away from drug-centred movies this year. The few remaining films which featured substantial drugs use were satisfactorily accommodated at '18' or occasionally '15' depending on the nature of the substance and whether its treatment was responsibly handled. These last two elements are particularly important considerations when making classification decisions.

The portrayal of drugs use was highlighted as an area of particular concern in the public consultation exercise on the new Guidelines. Even so, only two works required cuts to sight of drug usage. The first was an Italian horror video made in 1986, ***Demons***, and the second was an episode from a more contemporary TV horror/paranormal series ***The Hunger*** entitled ***Ménage à Trois***. The scene cut from ***Demons*** featured the sight of cocaine being scraped from a woman's breast with a razor blade prior to ingestion, with the clear inference that drug consumption heightens sexual pleasure, a message the Board considered irresponsible.

The cut made to ***Ménage à Trois*** featured close shots of the preparation of morphine for injection. The ritualised construction of this scene with its shots of a glossily lit syringe and the drug and blood being mixed inside the cylinder was presented quite uncritically. This was at odds with the Board's view that such sequences tend to add to the allure and mystique of drug-taking and may affirm drug abuse as a normal and acceptable part of contemporary culture.

Two other works with a drug-related theme offered a challenge to current Guidelines with one in particular being subject to much internal debate before finally being passed uncut. ***Saving Grace*** was a whimsical comedy about a debt-ridden middle-aged widow who discovers a ready income in growing cannabis. It was arguable that the film tacitly endorsed the use of cannabis as a legitimate and 'normal' activity despite one of the characters voicing some criticism as a counter viewpoint. However, it was felt that the work would have very limited appeal to young people and there were sufficient reminders throughout the film that possession of cannabis is a criminal offence which can lead to a lengthy term of imprisonment. The film indeed lacked any other notable issues to take it beyond '15' at which it was duly passed without cuts.

At the other end of the scale was Darren Aronofsky's much-acclaimed ***Requiem for a Dream***, a film which targeted the culture of dependency on both legal and illegal drugs and illustrated with sometimes harrowing vividness the seemingly unbreakable cycle of drug-dependent behaviour. The overtly critical stance taken by the film's director was so apparent that a '15' was considered as a possible option, but this became redundant essentially because of one scene in which a young female junkie is forced to perform a lewd sex act in order to get her 'fix'.

The Board is vigilant to public concerns about the depiction of drugs in films and videos, but must remain aware that this is an issue which cannot always be neatly compartmentalised. Irresponsible treatments of this much debated issue risk being restricted to the highest rating category or even cut where current Guidelines are breached. It is clear, however, that the public respect honest and realistic portrayals of drug use which weigh both sides of the argument. Nevertheless, it is these portrayals which create the most interesting internal debates and challenge any tendency the Board might have to reach automatically for the scissors or the most restrictive category available.

Animals

One of the pieces of legislation which the Board has to take into account when classifying films is the Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937 which prohibits "any scene...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". This duty was subsequently extended to video works through the Video Recordings Act 1984. Whilst there were no cuts to films for theatrical release in 2000 as a result of this legislation, a hare coursing scene in ***Snatch***, which showed a hare being chased by two dogs, raised



All works which come into the BBFC must first be measured and checked before beginning the classification process.

an interesting debate. However, because the hare coursing was not illegal and there was no evidence of the hare being treated cruelly, the Board concluded that the scene had not breached the 1937 Act.

There were a number of cuts made to video features which showed cruelty to animals. These were; **A Gunfight**, in which a snake was killed, **Cannibal Ferox** where a small animal suspended on a rope was seen banging against the side of a jeep, **Sex Medusa** from which a scene with snakes writhing in flames was cut, **Urban Gothic - Dead Meat** from which shots of a frog in a blender were cut, and **Demystifying the Devil** in which cuts were made to scenes of a monkey bound to a crucifix and an attack on a rabbit. Cock fighting was cut in **Just Insatiable** and **Naya Daur** and horse falls were removed from **Rambo III**, **Daredevils of the Desert**, **The Legend of the Lone Ranger**, **Great Movie Stunts - Raiders of the Lost Ark** and **Waterloo**. Although it is true these days that, thanks in part to the efforts of the American Humane Association, animal cruelty is generally absent from mainstream cinema and video, it is still necessary for the Board to exercise vigilance across a wide range of submitted material and to require cuts where necessary.

Language

‘Bad language’ continues to be a controversial issue with the general public. The Board’s research for the new Guidelines, published in September, showed that, while most people seem to accept that the more liberal use of coarse epithets is an unavoidable part of modern life, they also regret it and wish to keep bad language, as far as it is possible, away from children in film and video.

The research also showed that it was impossible to create an agreed list of reliably offensive words because of cultural and regional differences in attitudes to bad language. The so called ‘laundry-list’ of words in order of

offensiveness which had featured in the old Guidelines was dropped and a greater emphasis was placed upon context. In the sensitive ‘12’ category, for example, acceptability ranges from “moderate swearwords may be used” to “the use of strong language (e.g. ‘fuck’) should be rare and justified by context”. This did not, however, prevent controversy over the highly successful British film **Billy Elliot**, which was set in the North East during the miners’ strike of 1984-5. The BBFC felt that there was a natural audience and appeal around the ‘PG’/‘12’ age range, but that the high incidence of the use of strong language in the work imposed a ‘15’ classification. This decision was not universally accepted and resulted in letters both to the Board and the newspapers accusing the Board of being heavy handed. However, the Board felt that the general viewing public would not regard it as appropriate for youngsters to be exposed to such concentrated swearing. By contrast, the hugely popular **Chicken Run** provoked a number of complaints from parents who objected strongly to the single use of the words “bugger” and “git face” in a film rated ‘U’ for a family audience.

The Spike Lee film **The Original Kings of Comedy**, which was liberally sprinkled with the coarser swear words, was given a ‘15’ rather than an ‘18’ rating because it was felt that the language was mitigated by its context of working black American comedians. It was not likely to cause offence to its intended audience. In a similar vein the Julien Temple video documentary **The Filth and the Fury**, about punk and The Sex Pistols, featured more of the stronger expletives than one would normally expect at ‘15’. Again it was felt that the natural documentary context mitigated what would normally have been regarded as adult fare only.





Examiners take careful notes throughout the film to enable them to write the detailed reports which support their classification decisions.

Occasionally the Board is seen as being over-cautious in this area. The popular Robin Williams comedy ***Mrs. Doubtfire*** was originally classified in 1994 as a '12' because of the language issues. A number of local authorities then overturned this decision (as is their right) and gave the film an uncut 'PG' certificate. The Board learned from this experience and this year a video version was released at the same category with Williams' quick-fire, innuendo-flavoured monologue intact.

The Board has continued to take the issue of language seriously in the area of titles that may cause offence by their public display. As a consequence, a Roy 'Chubby' Brown video was refused its original planned title, ***Ginger Minge***, as was a work by an Australian comedian entitled ***Wog Boy***. This concern extends even to sex tapes which employ titles unacceptable to the Board because of their harsh and derogatory language about women.

Other Languages

The Board classified 10 Welsh language works and 767 foreign language film and video titles (including trailers). This represents over eight and a half per cent of all titles submitted to the Board and an increase of 17 per cent on the previous year. The most unusual language to be used in a film apart from Xhosa, which was used in a film advertisement, was Bhutanese - ***The Cup*** was a meditative tale about exiled monks in India watching football on TV. The other languages were, Cantonese, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Iranian, Italian, Japanese, Kurdish, Lebanese, Malayalam, Mandarin, Nepalese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Serbo-Croat, Spanish, Swedish, Tamil, Urdu, Vietnamese and Yiddish. Cantonese titles formed the majority of non-subtitled, un-translated material (214), followed by Hindi (186).

Chinese Chinese film submissions, mostly Mandarin titles from China and Taiwan, went up in 2000. Notable features were ***Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon***, ***The Emperor and the Assassin*** and ***A One and a Two***. The only Cantonese film from Hong Kong to be submitted was the award-winning ***In the Mood for Love***.

Twenty five Cantonese TV drama serials from Hong Kong were classified on video in the year, of which about a third were period dramas set in China. The most popular were ***At the Threshold of an Era II*** (the sequel to last year's family epic and totalling more than 50 episodes) and ***War of the Genders*** (100 episodes of romantic comedy). Others such as ***The Green Hope*** and ***Reaching Out*** set out deliberately to educate and moralise. Most of the serials were aimed at a family audience and placed in junior categories. There was a noticeable increase in sexual references and discreetly portrayed sex. Violence, with few exceptions, remained mild.

The most significant video submissions were ***The Big Boss***, ***Fist of Fury***, and ***Enter the Dragon*** starring the martial arts legend, Bruce Lee. ***Fist of Fury*** and ***Enter the Dragon*** had been subject to cuts in the past to remove sight of nunchukas (or chainsticks) or for violence, but all three were passed '18' without cuts under the recently revised weapons policy and Guidelines. Other features, mostly martial arts drama or thrillers of the 80s and early 90s, included a number of works by director Yuen Woo Ping (***Snake in the Eagle's Shadow***, ***Drunken Master***, ***Legend of a Fighter***). ***Last Hero in China*** was submitted on video and given a higher classification than the '12' for the subtitled film passed in 1993. The video submission was dubbed and subtitled and given a '15' because of the strong language.

Cuts were made to two video works: **Body Weapon** (Hong Kong police action) to reduce significantly images of rape, sexual violence and humiliation which were unacceptable even at '18'; and **Sex Medusa** (a mythical horror feature) to remove the sight of snakes writhing in flames to comply with the Cinematograph (Animals) Act 1937.

South Asian It was another bumper year for South Asian language works with a more than ten per cent increase in the overall number of titles classified including a Hindi version of the James Bond movie **The World Is Not Enough!**

The new Guidelines had an impact on the classification of South Asian works and while there was a reduction in the number of 'PG' classified cinema works there was a significant increase in the number classified '12'. For video works there was a significant drop in the number of works classified 'PG' but more than 20 per cent increase in the number of works classified '12' and '15'.

Perhaps the key areas in which the revised Guidelines have taken effect are those of English bad language in Hindi and Tamil language works, violence and the significance of theme and treatment. There is an ongoing debate within the Board as to the impact of mild English bad language in the context of an otherwise South Asian language movie or video. Violence in South Asian films and videos tends to be deliberately 'over the top' in order to emphasise either the villainy of the 'bad guys' or the heroism of the 'good guys'. This can, however, be problematic in movies which are usually submitted with a 'PG' request from the distributor. The addition of extravagant sound effects (commonly referred to as 'dushum') and occasional colourful splats and spurts of blood simply add to classification problems. The issue of 'hyperbolised' or 'hyper real' violence in South Asian films will be considered in some depth during 2001.

However, South Asian cinema continues to appeal to a growing audience and the Hindi romance **Mohabbatein** made a showing in the UK top ten movie charts. This wider interest was boosted by the first Bollywood 'Oscars' ceremony at the Millennium Dome and by veteran Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan winning a BBC Radio Online listeners' survey to identify the most popular actor of all time (Hollywood stars included).

There was a number of significant South Asian language works during the year. These included the usual romance and action spectaculars, interesting new works from a new wave of Bollywood directors and a re-release for **Mughal E-Azam** (one of Bollywood's all-time classic movies). **Hey Ram!** (dealing with issues thrown up by communal strife in India during the transition to independence) was interesting because the Board received both the Hindi and Tamil versions for classification within the same week. The Hindi version had been significantly pre-cut to reduce detail to scenes of violence, but the Tamil version was relatively uncut and consequently the two versions of the same film were passed at two different categories ('12' for the Hindi and '15' for the Tamil version) and both opened on the same weekend. **Split Wide Open** (another mixed language movie, this time exploring the sexual mores of middle class citizens of Mumbai) and **Snip!** (a dark comedy about a hairdresser who gets embroiled in criminal activities) were nods to the burgeoning bilingual/bicultural middle class Indian audiences and the latter movie was filmed with dialogue in about equal parts English and Hindi.

Gang (in which a group of four friends move from petty crime to becoming criminal gang lords in Mumbai) was submitted in a pre-cut form for cinema release but the distributor had inadvertently left in a single use of an expletive which in English would at best be strong but in a Hindi context could be coarse. This word was cut for the



final ‘PG’ classification on film but the subsequent video version of the work was submitted uncut and passed ‘18’ for strong violence, the coarse Hindi language and two uses of ‘fuck’.

The most significant moment in South Asian cinema during the year (besides the Bollywood Oscars) was the head to head clash between movies starring the hunky Bollywood newcomer Hrithik Roshan in *Mission Kashmir* and Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Kahn in the lush musical romance *Mohabbatein*. Both films were released during the Diwali weekend in November. *Mission Kashmir* provided a heady mix of violence and political comment in regard to the various competing interests in the Indian/Pakistani region of Kashmir. A line of dialogue which was deemed to be potentially racist and promoting violence against the Indian state was cut and the film was classified ‘12’. *Mohabbatein* continued the current Bollywood vogue for lush musical romances but featured the now typical use of mild English language expletives which demanded a ‘PG’ classification.

Significant Punjabi language works included *Door Nahin Nankana* and *Khalsa Mera Roop Hai Khaas*. The musical romance *Aik Aur Love Story* showed that while Pakistani cinema lacks the slick finish of Bollywood there is a freshness to the so-called ‘Lollywood’ product that has much to commend it.

Video/DVD submissions included several more titles in the Yash Raj series of classic Bollywood releases - including the 1970s love stories *Bobby* and *Kabhi Kabhie* and the Raj Kapoor classics *Mera Naam Joker* and *Sangam* – and a long-awaited video submission for the Madhuri Dixit starring art house film *Gaja Gamini* (which explores the many facets of Indian womanhood).

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence continues to be a serious concern for the Board and this is reflected in the new classification Guidelines. The Board maintains a strict policy on sexual violence in film, video and related digital media, but recognises that it is a legitimate theme for creative exploration and that adult viewers in principle should be allowed to regulate their own viewing habits whatever the theme chosen.

In most cases, scenes of sexual violence are responsibly staged and presented, and can be dealt with through the classification system, with the category reflecting the strength of the material. However, not all works can be dealt with solely by classification. The Video Recordings Act 1984, requires the Board to have special regard to the harm that may be done to viewers or to society through the depiction of, among other elements, sex and violence in video works. While research on potentially harmful ‘media effects’ is inconclusive at best, the Board does believe that certain violent scenes with the potential to trigger sexual arousal may encourage an association between sexual violence and sexual gratification. This in turn may lead to, or encourage, the reinforcement of antisocial attitudes or behaviour. Scenes and narratives which suggest that victims of sexual violence ‘deserve’ or ‘enjoy’ the sexual assault, cause particular concern. In the strongest cases, where classification alone cannot contain the potential for harm, cuts may be required.

During 2000, the Board made no cuts to cinema features for sexual violence. The only such work cut on sexual violence grounds was a trailer for the film *Siberia*, with a small cut to the sight of a man roughly handling a woman in a manner which strongly suggested sexual assault. In the more clearly defined context of the feature, the same scene was passed uncut, both on film and video.





There were, nevertheless, films to which the Board gave particular and serious consideration. One of these was the Paul Verhoeven thriller, ***Hollow Man***. The film contained a small number of scenes in which a male scientist, who had developed a means to make himself invisible, used the device to prey on unknowing women. The voyeuristic sexual violence, which generally avoided titillating detail, was ultimately considered unlikely to be harmful to adult viewers and, therefore, did not warrant cuts. It was strong enough, however, to get an '18' certificate on film, and also on video later in the year.

The Board's policy on works featuring depictions of sadomasochistic sexual activity has always been concerned with possible harm, to themselves or to others, caused by the actions of those who might be encouraged to copy such behaviour. ***The Story of O***, a French soft-core sex film of the seventies in which a woman is schooled in sadomasochistic sex to please her lover, including willingly submitting to whippings, was resubmitted 25 years after it was rejected in 1975. The lack of strong sadistic or sexual detail, the evident consent of the female character and the extremely dated style led to the judgement that it was no longer necessary to deny adults the right to see this film. It was also passed '18' on video later in the year. The South Korean video work ***Lies*** provided a fascinating, fictional study of a contemporary sadomasochistic relationship and also included portrayals of consensual whipping. The Board did not judge the work likely to encourage viewers to engage in dangerous, violent activity and the video was passed '18' without cuts. A serious documentary on an articulate and intelligent female practitioner of sadomasochism, ***Didn't Do It For Love***, included a sequence in which potentially dangerous sadistic game playing (including the use of a knife, a naked flame and throttling) was demonstrated in detail. Concerns that this particular portrayal might encourage a small

minority of viewers to copy behaviour which could prove harmful, and even fatal, were confirmed by a clinical psychologist. The distributor was required to make cuts.

Arguably the most controversial film passed by the Board in 2000 was Pier Paolo Pasolini's final work ***Salo, o le 120 Giornate di Sodoma***. This 1975 film, adapted from the Marquis de Sade novel 120 Days of Sodom, has had a chequered classification history. After its original rejection by the Board and seizure by the police in the 1970s, and until 1996 when the film was shown uncut by the National Film Theatre, the only version available to British audiences was a re-edited 'club cut' which played to cinema club audiences until the print was too damaged to be used. The film's use of the de Sade novel portrayed the depravity perpetrated by Mussolini's final regime in Salo, Northern Italy, during the last 18 months of World War II. It was, however, judged today to be acceptable for an adult audience, and passed '18' with no cuts on film and subsequently on video.

The Board required cuts to 20 video works altogether on grounds of sexual violence. This compares with the 22 videos cut for sexual violence in 1999, but is a significant reduction from the 46 and 44 titles which were cut for sexual violence in 1998 and 1997 respectively. As in the previous year the lower number reflects a reduction in the number of titles submitted with problematic scenes of sexual violence, rather than any relaxation of the Board's policy. There were no cuts made at the distributor's request in order to make a work suitable for a younger audience. Of the 20 videos for which cuts were required, 11 were adult features: the sexualised material removed included a rape scene, sexual assault of a drugged person, excessive and aggressive slapping and hitting with objects causing injury, throttling, explicit dialogue fantasies about non-consensual sex, and a fantasy sequence in which a female

cuts the throat and severs the head of another female. The remaining nine videos for which cuts were required come from a range of genres including one documentary, ***Manumission the Movie***. Cuts included highly sexualised detail of sexual assault and rape, including animated rape images from a Japanese manga feature. The previously cut 70s and 80s features ***Demons***, ***The Mutilator***, ***The Toolbox Murders***, and ***I Am Frigid...Why?*** were all passed '18' on video, with cuts made to earlier submissions for sexualised assaults and rape images being maintained.

The 1970s French film, ***Pussy Talk***, which was originally rejected on film in 1976, was passed '18' on video after cuts were required to remove eroticised rape which was presented on the screen of a pornographic cinema. By contrast, the 1974 Michael Winner film ***Death Wish*** which was originally passed 'X' without cuts, this time had cuts imposed on video to remove a sexual assault on a young woman.

Sex and Pornography

During 2000, the portrayal of human sexual activity continued to be a contentious issue on both film and video, and in serious and pornographic works. The Board's sex standards were subject to scrutiny by the media, the High Court and, through a very extensive consultation exercise, the general public. The resulting changes in policy, set out in revised Classification Guidelines published in September 2000, were significant in their impact on adults' rights to choose their own entertainment and also took account of the European Convention on Human Rights which was incorporated into UK law under the Human Rights Act which came into force on 2 October 2000.

The year began with a flurry of media interest in the decision to give an '18' rather than a '15' to Neil Jordan's adaptation of Graham Greene's ***The End of the Affair***,

with the film makers arguing that the Board was out of touch with the public over the acceptability of frank representations of sexual activity in works deemed suitable for 15 year olds. This proposition was tested as part of the consultation process and there was a clear indication that the public would accept some relaxation in this area provided that the context was loving and responsible. The limited interest, 'sex and nuns' film ***Sacred Flesh*** was also considered before the new Guidelines were formulated and cuts were made to two brief sequences of explicit sexual activity which were not considered to be justified by the context. This made it the only '18' rated cinema film to be cut for any reason during 2000.

The advent of the DVD format has resulted in the consideration of a large number of works which are intended to appear alongside the main feature as 'added extras'. Often these are innocuous interviews with the stars, or straightforward 'behind the scenes' documentaries, but some are 'deleted scenes' which were left out of the final version of the feature by the film maker for artistic or commercial reasons. The DVD release of ***Lolita*** was to be accompanied by a number of such deleted scenes but two, entitled ***The Comic Book*** and ***The Lake Point Cottages***, featured highly eroticised representations of the 14 year old Lolita character having sex with the middle-aged Humbert. Both featured a degree of sexual detail which was not present in the full feature, and were presented out of context. The Board was concerned that these sequences might invite feelings of arousal towards a child and that the material might be misused by those predisposed to seek illegal sexual encounters. In view of the serious possibility of harm being caused to some individuals and potentially through their actions to society more widely, the Board refused certificates to these two works.

The Board's policy with regard to pornographic, Restricted 18 ('R18') certificate videos sold in licensed sex shops underwent significant further scrutiny and development during the course of 2000. In 1999 the Video Appeals Committee (VAC) had upheld appeals by Sheptonhurst and Prime Time Promotions against the Board's decision to refuse 'R18' certificates to seven videos which included explicit images of real sex. The VAC had rejected the Board's argument that the videos breached the provisions of the Video Recordings Act (VRA) because they had the potential to harm children. In its written decision, the VAC had stated that "We might have taken a different view if there was evidence that the effects were affecting more than a small minority of children or were devastating if this did happen". The Board sought and was granted a Judicial Review of the decision, arguing that the VAC had based its verdict on a definition of harm which was an incorrect interpretation of the VRA. In May 2000, the High Court found against the Board: the seven titles were consequently granted 'R18' certificates. The results of research commissioned by the Board into whether viewing pornography by itself harmed children were published in November. They confirmed that there was little evidence of harm unless the child was being subjected to a wider pattern of abuse or neglect. Nevertheless, a majority of the childcare professionals surveyed believed that viewing explicit pornography would be harmful to any child, and that children should be protected from it.

The Judicial Review decision also coincided with the results of the Board's extensive consultation process which indicated that the public was increasingly relaxed about screen sex. When members of the public had been given the opportunity to examine the issue of consensual sex in 'R18' videos in detail (through Citizens' Juries) their recommendation was that anything legal should be permitted. These findings were given support by the 17th British Social Attitudes Survey, which revealed that a majority of those questioned felt that adults have the right

to see explicit sex if they wish to. The Board considered the High Court judgement and the research carefully and consulted with, among others, the Home Office, the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, and H.M. Customs and Excise before drawing up new Guidelines for the 'R18' category. These new Guidelines came into force in July 2000 and allow explicit representations of real sex between consenting adults. A number of important constraints were, however, retained.

The Board continues to take very seriously research which suggests that pornography which involves violence or lack of consent can have harmful effects. The new 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 new Guidelines explicit works have since been cut to remove sequences in which participants are hit, humiliated, abused, or are penetrated by objects likely to cause harm. One work, ***A Caning for Miss Granger***, was rejected outright because it depicted a non-consenting scenario in which a female employee was subjected to increasingly heavy blows to her buttocks which caused significant bruising, swelling and weals.

The 'adult' industry had held back on submitting titles pending the outcome of the Judicial Review and the anticipated change in BBFC Guidelines. It was to be expected, therefore, that the number of 'R18' titles examined would rise significantly during the latter half of the year. Despite this increase, the number of works passed 'R18' during 2000 amounted to less than three per cent of the total number of works passed in all categories. With the number of sex shop outlets limited by

the need to obtain a licence from the relevant local authority, the Board does not expect the number of ‘R18’ submissions to go on rising indefinitely.

Sex tapes which do not feature explicit images of real sex are generally passed ‘18’, although all the restrictions which apply to the content of ‘R18’ videos also apply to sex works in this category. Accordingly, two videos were cut to remove verbal rape fantasies (spoken by female performers, which further served to endorse rape myths) and others were cut to remove the sexualisation of adults role-playing as children. Most cuts to classified sex works were made at the distributor’s request, with sexual detail being removed to allow the work to pass at ‘18’ rather than ‘R18’. This is because few companies have access to the small number of licensed sex shops in the UK and ‘R18’ videos cannot be sold by mail order.

The BBFC has always operated a policy of insisting on changes to the title of a work if it is likely to cause unusual offence to a significant proportion of those likely to come across it; or if it suggests that the content may be degrading, dehumanising or humiliating; or if it suggests that sexual participants are under 18 or that illegal sexual activity is being depicted. This policy applies to all works but is particularly relevant when dealing with pornographic videos. During 2000 the policy was formalised and details were sent to all distributors.

Digital Media

Digital media submissions were slightly up on the previous year, with 28 works classified compared with 21 in 1999. Since uncontentious works need not be submitted to the BBFC the majority, not surprisingly, attracted the more restrictive ‘15’ and ‘18’ categories with only one work gaining a ‘PG’ classification. Once again, digital works were either action-orientated games, 18 in total, or soft core erotica CD-ROMs, ten in total.

Invariably, the action/adventure games were submitted because of the quantity and quality of their computer-generated ‘violence’, for which current digital technology enables a much greater degree of visual realism than was possible even a year ago. While the protagonists arguably appear more ‘human’ and the injuries inflicted upon them can often appear bloody and grisly, there is still little evidence to suggest that such material is likely to cause ‘harm’ to the mature user. Regulatory intervention, therefore, is only likely to be appropriate through the use of the categories to make the stronger material less accessible to younger players. This is not to suggest that such games are innocuous. Games where the principal pleasure is not only in the violence, but in the way in which the violence is depicted, continue to be severely restricted because of concern about how young children receive the material and how they may be affected by it.

Sexual material submitted on CD-ROM is nearly always destined for inclusion in an accompanying ‘top shelf’ magazine and the material is, consequently, relatively inexplicit and easily kept within the bounds of the adult category. No cuts were required to any of the digital media works submitted in 2000.

Children

The Board’s main concern when classifying all films below the ‘18’ category is “to ensure that the younger and more vulnerable members of society are protected from harm” (**The Role of the BBFC**). Many of the issues discussed in the previous sections of this Report have been based on concerns about children and the Examiners have these concerns constantly in mind when viewing works for classification. All but one of the 12 cinema films cut last year were in the ‘PG’, ‘12’ and ‘15’ categories.

One clear outcome of the Guidelines consultation process is that parents expect and welcome protective intervention on behalf of children. The BBFC also has to take account of legal considerations. In particular, the Protection of Children Act 1978 makes it a crime to produce or publish indecent photographs of a child. In order to ensure that the terms of the Act are complied with, the Board regularly consults experts in the law, psychology and child abuse where issues are raised concerning the welfare of children. In a year in which the activities of paedophiles received considerable press and media attention, the Board exercised its customary care where any doubts arose about film and video material.

Much of the footage in ***Canada Naturally - Part 1***, a video documentary about naturism, consisted of families enjoying normal holiday activities in a nudist colony. Concerns, however, were raised by some soft-focus romanticised shots of naked children. Although these shots were ostensibly innocent in nature, they raised the issue of sexualisation of youngsters. A cuts list was, therefore, offered to the distributor to ensure that the work complied with the provisions of the Protection of Children Act, but the work remains unclassified as the distributor chose not to proceed.

Similar concerns were raised by the film ***Of Freaks And Men***, a Russian-language feature about turn-of-the-century pornographers in pre-revolutionary St Petersburg. The images at issue, which presented naked children posing for the camera and a child seen briefly in what might be interpreted as a sexual situation, were shown to officers of the Paedophile Unit of the Metropolitan Police, who judged them to be unproblematic. Both the film and the video were passed ‘18’ uncut.

Some of the most complex problems in the area of child protection were raised by ***Urotsukidoji IV – Infernal Road - Episode One - The Secret Garden***. This animated Japanese manga fantasy feature, first submitted in 1996, had been previously rejected because it contained sexualised images of children. Some of the graphic sexual violence of the original submission had been pre-cut from the new version, but it contained a considerable amount of supplementary material. In the light of continuing concerns about passing material which might be perceived as validating the illegal behaviour of paedophiles, or be misused in the ‘grooming’ of children for sexual abuse, it was decided that rejection was the only safe option, and the work remains unclassified.

While it is incumbent on the Board to operate in the area of child protection with great caution, a balance must be struck so that legitimate works that are, in practice, not harmful should be classified intact, while the potentially dangerous is screened out. The Board seeks to achieve this balance by wide consultation and by taking specialist advice where necessary.

The role of the Advisory Panel on Children’s Viewing is described elsewhere in the Annual Report. It is important, however, to record here the value of the Panel’s advice and counsel during the past year, particularly in relation to the new classification Guidelines and in response to staff presentations about violence, drugs use and language.

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.

There were no new appeals during the year, but a decision made by the VAC in 1999 had a significant impact on the activities of the Board during 2000. Following the VAC's finding in favour of Prime Time Promotions and Sheptonhurst Ltd (see **BBFC Annual Report 1999**) the Board decided to seek a Judicial Review on the grounds that the judgement was based on a definition of harm which was an incorrect interpretation of the Video Recordings Act. The Board was concerned that the level of pornography present in the seven sex videos that had been rejected by the Board might be harmful to children who might see them. The Judicial Review took place on 6 April and the High Court found against the Board on 16 May. As a direct result of this decision the Board accepted the necessity to revise the Guidelines used to classify 'R18' videos and passed the seven videos.

The new 'R18' Guidelines, published in July, reflect the legal position created by the outcome of the Judicial Review. The Guidelines, which are available on the Board's website or direct from the Board, set out clearly what is not acceptable in 'R18' videos as well as what is allowed. There is no question of anything which is illegal being shown, or of any material which is likely to encourage an interest in abusive sexual activity. Violent sex continues to be unacceptable and it must be clear that all activity is fully consensual. (Further information is provided in the preceding section on **Sex and Pornography**).



video appeals committee42

Following the Judicial Review, the Home Office issued a consultation paper on the regulation of 'R18' videos. Changes were proposed to the Video Recordings Act 1984 including the creation of criminal offences relating to children seeing 'R18' videos. Changes were also suggested to the VAC in terms of status and recruitment process. The Board submitted a response which is available on the Board's website. In particular the Board pointed out that there was no proper basis for any public perception that the VAC had been other than conscientious and responsible in its judgements (*notwithstanding* its recent finding against the Board). The Board was unable to support the criticism in the consultation document that the VAC did not "reflect the diversity required". The Board went on to recommend that any appointment process for the VAC be kept separate from Government and Whitehall and commended to the Government the arrangements for appointments to an Appeals Body which had been proposed by ICSTIS (the public body which regulates premium rate telephone services). In addition the BBFC recommended that the VAC's role should in future be to decide whether the Board has been fair, consistent and legally correct in the application of its published policy and Guidelines. The Board also suggested that there should be a statutory requirement that 'R18' videos should be clearly and prominently labelled with an appropriate warning referring to the dangers of exposing children to their contents.

At the end of 2000, the full membership of the Video Appeals Committee was as follows:

President:

John Wood CB: Solicitor; Consultant to Morgan Lewis and Bockius, Solicitors; former Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions; 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 Television, Editor of Blue Peter; Consultant to the Director-General of the BBC since 1988.

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

Clive Hollin: Forensic Psychologist; Professor of Psychology, University of Leicester; holder of the British Psychological Society senior award for distinguished contribution to the field of Forensic Psychology.

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: Governing Council, Family Policy Studies Centre.

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



consultative council44

The Consultative Council (originally called the Video Consultative Council) is an advisory forum set up as a result of the Video Recordings Act. It meets thrice-yearly and is chaired by the President or one of the Vice Presidents of the BBFC. It is a valued source of advice to the Board and its membership includes representatives from the video, broadcasting, record and leisure software industries, officers from central and local government and persons of individual distinction and expertise. Council meetings allow for an exchange of views between very different professional worlds. In 2000 the 'R18' issue, the new Guidelines, video games and consumer advice were major topics of discussion. Members also agreed that the Council should be restructured and renamed.

The Structure of the Consultative Council

Whilst the three-part structure outlined above continued to serve the Council well, as it had since its creation in 1985, it was generally recognised that the Board now needed to draw on a wider range of expertise and experience and from a broader regional and ethnic base. Post 'Nolan', appointments of 'persons of individual distinction and expertise' should be made by means of public advertisement rather than by invitation, as in the past.

At its June meeting, the Council accordingly agreed some changes. Membership would in future be for five years with the option of reappointment. Seven members should be drawn from the screen entertainment industry and up to six should come from the Local Authority sector, with at least one member to represent the interests respectively of Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, the English regions and London. In the 'Individual' category, the e-commerce sector should be represented, and also children's interest groups, research academics and educationalists. Advertisements were placed in national and ethnic minority newspapers and produced high quality applications. New members were duly appointed for 2001.

It was agreed that the Chair of the Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing should be invited to attend Council meetings as an ex officio member. This took effect from the November meeting, to which were also invited newly recruited Observers from the Internet Watch Foundation, The Independent Television Commission and the Police.

Discussions on the restructuring revealed some dissatisfaction with the Council's title. 'Video Consultative Council' seemed inappropriate in an age when DVDs, CD-Roms, video games and other interactive leisure software were also within the Council's remit. The official title 'BBFC Consultative Council' was adopted, with 'Consultative Council' as the abbreviated form for day-to-day use.

The Judicial Review and the 'R18' Issue

Council members were supportive of the Board's decision to seek a Judicial Review. The Judgement, which came in May, concluded that the Video Appeals Committee had reached a reasonable decision given the limited evidence of possible harm to children from watching pornography. The Council was also supportive of the Board's decision to amend the 'R18' Guidelines to take account of the legal declaration. The timing of the Home Office ***Consultation Paper on the Regulation of 'R18' Videos*** was unfortunate for the Council, with both publication and the deadline for responses coming between Council meetings. The proposals were, however, discussed at the November meeting, where members were also given the research report commissioned by the Board, ***'R18' Pornography: Are 'Experts' In A Position To Say That Children Are Harmed If They View 'R18' Videos?***

Classification Guidelines

Council members received copies of the draft Classification Guidelines and were invited to comment. They were kept informed about the public consultation and research programme and most members attended at least one of the Board's Roadshows. In June there was a discussion of the proposed easing of the Guidelines for adult audiences at '18', in view of the Board's continuing responsibilities under the Video Recordings Act. The Director confirmed that the Board would not be relaxing its rigorous policy on sexual violence. Following the publication of the new Guidelines in September some members expressed surprise that the research evidence showed that bad language continued to be important to the public. It was noted that it was the language issue which had prevented the film ***Billy Elliot*** from being classified below '15' and that some words were still highly offensive to large sections of the public. The Board was advised that the industry would be unlikely to oppose changes which were so clearly in touch with public opinion. The Council was informed that the launch of the Guidelines had been successful, with very little complaint from any quarter.

Workflow

The Council received a report from the Director at each of its meetings about this issue of vital importance to the industry. The volume of video submissions for 2000 was considerably greater than predicted, with 7727 videos, trailers and advertisements as the final total for the year. DVD was only partly responsible for the increase and members identified as other possible factors the popularity of 1970s material and the re-issuing of children's videos. It was predicted that there might be a future fall in submissions if publishers ceased to issue individual works in both DVD and video formats. During the course of the year the Director was able to report that the further development of the Board's IT systems, the introduction of

a speedier 'secondary classification' process for smaller format versions of works already classified, the recruitment of new examiners and other arrangements had enabled the Board to achieve a good turnaround standard in spite of this unprecedented growth of work.

The Board was also able to respond to requests from industry representatives for the Board to classify DVD discs as single works, rather than treating each component or add-on as a separate entity. After taking legal advice and discussions with LACOTS on behalf of Trading Standards Officers, the Director was able to inform the November meeting that under the Video Recordings Act the Board would be able to classify a collection of items in any video format with a single certificate, provided that the collection had a single theme or purpose e.g. a feature plus related add-ons or a series of cartoons.

Video Games

In response to a Council member's request, a modification was introduced on the BBFC website to allow differentiation between video games and other types of interactive leisure software. One member drew the Council's attention to the number of unrated imported games on the market. At the June meeting Dr Jim Barratt, an Examiner with research experience in media violence and children, gave a presentation summarising the methods and findings of recent US research which had sought to demonstrate a link between playing violent games and real life aggression. The Council noted reservations about the report's methodology and regretted assertions made in the media. Members, nevertheless, expressed concern about the use of video games and, in particular, the repetitive manner in which some games were played.

Consumer Advice

In response to the public desire for more information about film content identified in the Guidelines consultation process, the Director sought the Council's advice on a series of BBFC proposals designed to increase its quality and availability. It was acknowledged that the provision of such advice was principally a matter for the film and video industries. One important area of discussion was video rental, where consumer advice was sometimes left behind in the shop if cassettes were taken home in the renter's box or white case. Members were also concerned by public misunderstandings about the 'PG' category, the pressure on poster space in video shops, poster production timescales in relation to the classification process and the dangers of providing too much advice. They recognised, however, that the Board needed to take this issue forward.

Apart from the principal officers of the BBFC, the membership of the Consultative Council in 2000 was as follows:

Sheila Abrahams, Justice of the Peace

Gill Bennet, National Association for Pastoral Care in Education (NAPCE)

Roger Bennett, European Leisure Software Publishers Association (ELSPA)

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

Professor Kevin Browne, Professor of Forensic and Family Psychology, University of Birmingham

Lavinia Carey, British Video Association (BVA)

June Dromgoole, Channel Four Television

Laurie Hall, Video Standards Council (VSC)

Steve Jenkins, Senior Editor, Feature Films, BBC Television

Cllr Peter Kent, Local Government Association (LGA)

Simon Lee, Entertainment Software Retailers Association (ESRA)

Bob Lewis, British Association of Record Dealers (BARD)

Michael Marland, Educationalist

Cllr Maurice Mills, Association of Local Authorities in Northern Ireland (ALANI)

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

John Woodward, Chief Executive Officer, Film Council

Observers

Keith Hale, Local Authorities Co-ordinating Body on Trading Standards (LACOTS)

Martin Jauch, Chief Superintendent, Metropolitan Police Service

David Kerr, Internet Watch Foundation

Birol Mehmet, Home Office

Guy Phelps, Independent Television Commission

Stephen Ruddell, Home Office

Jane Richardson, Head of Branch Criminal Law, Scottish Executive



advisory panel on children's viewing48

The Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing (APCV) was set up in 1999 with the remit of maintaining a watching brief on the activities of the BBFC where the interests of children are concerned. The Panel met on three occasions during last year under the Chairmanship of David Simpson, a District Judge. Meetings were attended by the Director and Deputy Director of the Board, and members of the Presidential team. The twelve members of the APCV all have specialist backgrounds working with children or children's issues and are drawn from the fields of social work, the judiciary, children's media, clinical psychology and education.

The Role of the APCV

The Panel considered what its function and role should be. It was agreed that it should inform the Board across the full range of children related issues and concerns and confirm or challenge policy decisions. Regular sessions with Board Examiners would take place, usually focussing on a particular policy issue. These would be informed by presentations, or occasionally, a complete viewing of a work which raised important points. The Panel concluded that it was generally best employed in a critical and reactive capacity rather than as part of the original decision-making process. The Panel would be issue-led, giving policy advice rather than engaging with everyday classification decisions. The first 18 months or so of the Panel's existence would to an important extent be committed to exploring a wide range of current Board concerns.

The 'R18' Guidelines

The Panel has provided invaluable advice on the repercussions of the 1999 Video Appeals Committee judgement and the subsequent Judicial Review. The specific issue of the potential for harm caused to children who might be exposed to 'R18' pornography video material was discussed at length and the Panel made appropriate representations to the Home Office, through its

Chairman, during the consultation process following the outcome of the Judicial Review. Members generally took the view that the less censorious stance taken by the BBFC in the new Guidelines was not likely to result in significant harm to children, a view which coincided with the findings of research in this area.

Advice on the Classification Guidelines

The APCV also contributed its expert opinion to other areas of the new Guidelines. In particular, Members took the view that the draft Guidelines were too censorious in relation to sex standards at '12'/'15' and that there was an argument for relaxing language standards at '12'. They were keen that at the '12'/'15' level depiction of drugs should be classified in such a way that children should not remain ignorant of the dangers of their use. The Panel also criticised elements in the draft Guidelines for lacking clarity. The Board responded to all these comments with amendments to the final version of the Guidelines.

Particular Issues

In line with the Panel's agreed procedure, Examiners gave major presentations on three issues: violence in 'PG' and '12' rated works, drugs portrayal, and the use of language in the lower classification categories. Each presentation was followed by a discussion between the Panel and the Board's staff from which important considerations for Board policy emerged.

The Panel was particularly concerned about violence in a film inflicted by one child upon another. It stressed, however, the importance of context as a mediating factor when applying Guidelines. In relation to drugs, Members found no evidence that film-makers wished to promote their use. Nevertheless, a morally ambiguous approach might be problematic particularly where there was no clear line drawn between a helpful demystification of the subject and an apparent normalisation of drug use. Members were

concerned also by what sometimes appeared to be a degree of racial and class stereotyping in the portrayal of drug users and dealers in recent films. A uniformly negative image of drug use ran a danger of being rejected as unrealistic by modern youth. On the subject of ‘bad’ language in the junior categories, Panel Members drew attention to the effect of tone and context on the acceptability of different terms. It was recognised that regional differences complicated the issues. The Panel recommended clearer consumer advice to enable parents to make judgements on behalf of their children. This was particularly relevant where the issue was potential offence, as would be the case with ‘bad’ language, rather than likely harm.

Media Education

Panel Members welcomed the BBFC’s ‘Roadshow’ initiative which took the Board around the UK explaining its Guidelines policies and debating with local audiences. However, they felt these could be built upon for the future with educational initiatives designed to help young people to become critical and independent consumers. Members stressed the generally robust nature of modern youth and their ability, properly informed, to select or reject from what was on offer. Children were more likely to be alarmed by reality coverage on television than by what they recognised as movie fiction.

APCV members:

David Simpson: District Judge [Magistrates Courts] (Chair)

Floella Benjamin, OBE: Children’s TV Presenter/
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

Alexander Paterson: Principal of a Residential School

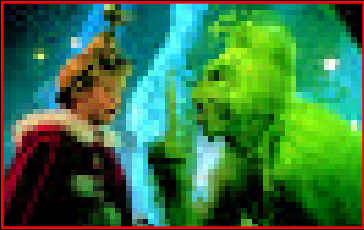
Elsbeth Rea: Independent Social Work Trainer

John Retallack: Freelance Theatre Director

Naomi Rich: Educational Broadband Assistant Producer

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

Vice Presidents
Janet Lewis-Jones
Lord Taylor of Warwick

**Council of Management
Chairman**
Brian Smith

Vice Chairman
Ewart Needham

Hon. Treasurer
John Millard

Members
Michael Cox
John Holton
William McMahon
Peter Rigby CBE, JP
Sylvia Sheridan
John Wilson

Director
Robin Duval
Deputy Director
Penny Averill
Financial Controller
Derek Mills
Systems Controller
David Harding
Head of Personnel
Clive Hooper
Head of Press and Publicity
Sue Clark



Report of the Council for the year ended 31st December 2000

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

As forecast, submissions increased substantially in 2000, resulting in the Board's income rising by 28 per cent compared with the previous year. The Board continually reviews its operational procedures with the aim of providing the best and most cost effective services to its clients. During 2000 the gains from these reviews have meant that the expenditure has grown at a lower rate than the increase in income. The Board has been able to hold its tariff at 1999 levels and, unless there is a sudden and unpredicted downturn in submissions, has no proposals to increase its tariff during 2001.

The finances of the Board are sound. However, during 2001 changes to the services provided will mean a more efficient service for our clients and as a result a significant drop in the Board's income. Examples of such changes include the streamlining of the classification of different versions of the same work and viewing individual DVD (digital versatile disc) items as a whole work. The Board has also reached the point where some increases in staff and extra accommodation are unavoidable in order to deal effectively with the 2001 throughput, which has been predicted by the Industry to increase substantially for the second year running. These changes will increase the Board's costs.

Council

The Members of the Council are shown on page 52 and all of them held office throughout the year. In addition Mr D C Calder resigned as a Member on 21st March 2000. All voting Members of the Council of Management retire in accordance with the Articles of Association and, being eligible, offer themselves for re-election.

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 2000 (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 £736,510 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 £5,056.

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

21st February 2001

Auditors’ Report to the Members of the
British Board of Film Classification

We have audited the accounts on pages 58 to 67 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 61.

Respective responsibilities of the members of the
Council and auditors

As described on page 55, the Members of Council are responsible for the preparation of accounts. It is our responsibility to form an independent opinion, based on our audit, on those accounts and to report our opinion to you.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with 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 at 31st December 2000 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.

21st February 2001

Profit and loss account for the year ended 31st December 2000

	Note	2000	1999
Turnover	(2)	3,971,711	3,091,597
Operating costs		(3,106,734)	(2,831,400)
Operating profit		864,977	260,197
Interest receivable and similar income	(3)	72,480	69,075
Interest payable and similar charges	(4)	(18,000)	(30,000)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	(6)	919,457	299,272
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	(7)	(182,947)	(44,384)
Retained profit for year		736,510	254,888
Retained profit at beginning of year		1,291,193	1,036,305
Retained profit at end of year		£2,027,703	£1,291,193

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 2000

	Note	2000	1999
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	(8)	553,350	519,589
Current assets			
Debtors	(9)	378,736	364,735
Investments	(10)	1,438,271	1,051,389
Cash at bank and in hand		1,146,310	576,524
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(11)	2,963,317 (877,713)	1,992,648 (580,141)
Net current assets		2,085,604	1,412,507
Total assets less current liabilities		2,638,954	1,932,096
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(12)	(588,000)	(617,652)
Net assets		£2,050,954	£1,314,444
Capital and reserves			
Capital reserve	(13)	23,251	23,251
Profit and loss account		2,027,703	1,291,193
Accumulated funds	(14)	£2,050,954	£1,314,444

Approved by the Council of Management on 21st February 2001.

J.B. Smith - Chairman

J.R. Millard - Hon. Treasurer

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

Cash flow statement for the year ended 31st December 2000

	2000	1999
Reconciliation of operating profit to net cash flow from operating activities		
Operating profit	864,977	260,197
Depreciation charges	151,597	179,991
(Profit) on sale of tangible fixed assets	(326)	(8,557)
Loss/(profit) on sale of current asset investments	(11,032)	7,111
(Decrease) in provisions for liabilities and charges	(47,652)	(186,647)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(11,839)	87,483
Increase in creditors	144,820	45,695
Net cash inflow from operating activities	£1,090,545	£385,273
Cash flow statement	2000	1999
Net cash inflow from operating activities	1,090,545	385,273
Return on investments and servicing of finance (note 15a)	70,318	67,976
Taxation	(30,195)	(45,345)
Capital expenditure (note 15b)	(185,032)	(178,784)
	945,636	229,120
Management of liquid resources (note 15c)	(375,850)	(236,956)
Increase/(decrease) in cash	£569,786	£(7,836)
	2000	1999
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in liquid funds (note 15d)		
Increase/(decrease) in cash in the year	569,786	(7,836)
Increase in current asset investments	386,882	229,845
Change in net liquid funds	956,668	222,009
Net liquid funds at beginning of year	1,627,913	1,405,904
Net liquid funds at end of year	£2,584,581	£1,627,913

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

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2000

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

Computer equipment 33.33 per cent per annum

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.

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.

2. Turnover

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

Notes to the accounts (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2000

3. Interest receivable and similar income	2000	1999
Bank deposit interest	37,816	31,237
Income from current asset investments	34,308	37,387
Other income	356	451
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£72,480	£69,075
	<hr/>	<hr/>
4. Interest payable and similar charges	2000	1999
Financing element of the provision for short leasehold deferred expenditure (see note 12)	£18,000	£30,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
5. Employees	2000	1999
Average monthly number of people employed by the company during the year:-		
Management	9	10
Administration	12	13
Examination	16	15
Technical	5	5
Registration	3	5
Programming	3	3
Accommodation	2	2
Casual	3	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	53	54
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Costs in respect of these employees:		
Salaries	1,692,701	1,476,017
Redundancy	50,574	-
Social security costs	170,634	150,566
Pensions	57,589	105,782
Life assurances	4,253	6,639
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£1,975,751	£1,739,004
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Council of Management remuneration:

No Member of the Council received any remuneration in 1999 or 2000.

Notes to the accounts (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2000

6. Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	2000	1999		
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation is arrived at, after charging:-	£	£		
Depreciation and amounts written off fixed assets	151,597	179,991		
Auditors' remuneration	18,000	18,250		
Rental of equipment	5,048	3,981		
Rental of premises	185,000	185,000		
and after crediting exceptional items:-				
Pension provision (note 16c ii)	44,834	-		
	<hr/>	<hr/>		
7. Tax on profit on ordinary activities	2000	1999		
The charge for the year comprises:-				
Corporation tax @ 28 per cent (1999 - 20 per cent)	224,261	44,384		
Adjustment to current taxation in respect of prior years	(41,314)	-		
	<hr/>	<hr/>		
	£182,947	£44,384		
	<hr/>	<hr/>		
8. Tangible fixed assets	Short Leasehold property deferred expenditure	Short Leasehold property	Furniture and equipment	Total
Cost				
At beginning of year	480,000	436,010	2,597,041	3,513,051
Additions	-	-	188,253	188,253
Disposals	-	-	(101,837)	(101,837)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At end of year	480,000	436,010	2,683,457	3,599,467
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Notes to the accounts (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2000

8. Tangible fixed assets – (continued)

Depreciation				
At beginning of year	137,143	436,010	2,420,309	2,993,462
Charge for the year	27,429	-	124,168	151,597
Disposals	-	-	(98,942)	(98,942)
At end of year	164,572	436,010	2,445,535	3,046,117
Net book value				
At end of year	£315,428	£-	£237,922	£553,350
At beginning of year	£342,857	£-	£176,732	£519,589

9. Debtors	2000	1999
Trade debtors	268,392	259,620
Others	23,037	28,160
Prepayments and accrued income	87,307	76,955
	£378,736	£364,735

10. Current asset investments	2000	1999
Listed		
UK government securities	276,282	276,282
Other UK investments	1,161,989	775,107
	£1,438,271	£1,051,389
Market value of listed investments	£1,657,802	£1,421,895
Tax liability if listed investments were sold at market value	£57,400	£73,000

Notes to the accounts (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2000

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2000	1999
Trade creditors	179,251	100,184
Corporation tax	224,261	71,509
Other taxation and social security costs	152,511	122,450
Other creditors	233,756	198,050
Accruals and deferred income	87,934	87,948
	£877,713	£580,141

12. Provisions for liabilities and charges	2000	Leasehold property dilapidations	Pension scheme	Total
At beginning of year		570,000	47,652	617,652
Charged/(credited) to profit and loss account		18,000	(44,834)	(26,834)
Paid to pensioner		-	(2,818)	(2,818)
At end of year		£588,000	£-	£588,000

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.

1999	Leasehold property dilapidations	Pension scheme	Total
At beginning of year	540,000	234,299	774,299
Charged to profit and loss account	30,000	-	30,000
Transferred to Trustees of the pension scheme	-	(186,647)	(186,647)
At end of year	£570,000	£47,652	£617,652

Notes to the accounts (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2000

13. Capital reserve	2000	1999
At beginning and end of year	<u><u>£23,251</u></u>	<u><u>£23,251</u></u>
The capital reserve represents surpluses realised on sales of fixed assets prior to 1984.		
14 . Reconciliation of movements on accumulated funds	2000	1999
Profit for the financial year after taxation	<u>736,510</u>	<u>254,888</u>
Accumulated funds at beginning of year	<u>1,314,444</u>	<u>1,059,556</u>
Accumulated funds at end of year	<u><u>£2,050,954</u></u>	<u><u>£1,314,444</u></u>
15. Cash flow statement	2000	1999
a Return on investments and servicing of finance		
Interest received	<u>35,654</u>	<u>30,138</u>
Income from current asset investments	<u>34,308</u>	<u>37,387</u>
Other income	<u>356</u>	<u>451</u>
	<u><u>£70,318</u></u>	<u><u>£67,976</u></u>
b Capital expenditure		
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	<u>(188,253)</u>	<u>(187,591)</u>
Receipts from sale of tangible fixed assets	<u>3,221</u>	<u>8,807</u>
	<u><u>£(185,032)</u></u>	<u><u>£(178,784)</u></u>
c Management of liquid resources		
Purchase of current asset investments	<u>(585,198)</u>	<u>(472,874)</u>
Sale of current asset investments	<u>209,348</u>	<u>235,918</u>
	<u><u>£(375,850)</u></u>	<u><u>£(236,956)</u></u>

Notes to the accounts (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2000

15. Cash flow statement – (continued)				
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	576,524	569,786	-	1,146,310
Current asset investments	1,051,389	375,850	11,032	1,438,271
	<u><u>£1,627,913</u></u>	<u><u>£945,636</u></u>	<u><u>£11,032</u></u>	<u><u>£2,584,581</u></u>
16. Guarantees and other financial commitments				
a Capital commitments		2000		1999
At the year end, capital commitments were:				
Contracted for but not provided in the accounts		<u><u>£-</u></u>		<u><u>£19,154</u></u>
b Operating lease commitments				
The minimum annual rental on property held under an operating lease was as follows:-				
Lease which expires:		2000		1999
After 5 years		<u><u>£185,000</u></u>		<u><u>£185,000</u></u>
c Pension arrangements				
i The company operates a defined contribution scheme to provide retirement benefits for staff.				
ii On 1st December 1991, the company changed the scheme managers and entered into guarantees under which any employee retiring before 30th November 2001 could not be worse off by reason of the change. Included in provision for liabilities and charges was £44,834 to cover a potential shortfall in respect of one employee who died during the year. As a result this provision is no longer required.				
iii The total pension charge for the year was £57,589 (1999 - £105,782) after crediting the provision in (ii) above of £44,834 (1999 - nil) and including outstanding contributions of £13,253 (1999 - nil).				

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.

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.

- 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.

