

Thank you for this opportunity to lodge a submission for the Stage 2 reforms of Australia's National Classification Scheme.

I believe that Australia's National Classification Scheme is failing to protect children. Many films, books and computer games that are incoherent with the mental and emotional safety of minors are displayed in public because the system is ineffective.

At the first level, the goals of the system must be reformed so that protection of children is prioritised over the rights of adults to read, see or play whatever they wish.

In particular, children should not be exposed to pornography which teaches impressionable young boys especially that women are objects. Many studies show pornography to be addictive and connected with violence against women. These studies also demonstrate that it has serious and lasting negative effects on family relationships.

If we are to increase respect for women in our society and allow our sons and daughters to grow into responsible young men and women capable of building stable relationships, all pornographic content must be restricted from minors. The restrictions must include comic-style books widely available which often depict pornographic content and text-based pornographic novels which are unsuitable for children to read.

Violent pornography such as depictions of rape and obscene depictions such as bestiality must be completely banned. Unquestionably, any content which shows children engaged in sex acts or sexualized nudity must also be completely banned. It is unacceptable that comic books like *Gender Queer*, which shows its author engaged in a paedophile fantasy, are permitted in Australia.

Age restrictions and filters that prevent minors from accessing online pornography and clear ratings on books, games or films that link to pornographic websites are necessary.

Those who produce pornographic content – including pornographic books – must be required to have that content assessed and classified or face heavy penalties. The existing system has failed. Publishers, not parents, should be forced to pay for classification.

The unjustifiable decisions made by government bureaucrats to grant Unrestricted classifications to books like *Gender Queer* and *The Boys* must be reversed. These clearly portray violent rape, pornography and paedophilia fantasies but have been deemed to display sexual activity between consenting adults. The assessors of those books are blind or inept or have another agenda. Regardless, they were clearly unable to understand the material before them and the classification scheme should be amended to ensure that such incompetents are removed from their positions for their obvious failures of judgement.

We Australian parents can have no confidence in Australia's National Classification Scheme unless all the changes summarised here are made and the system is reformed to ensure that children are genuinely protected.