



No. 242 May 2008

Prince Caspian: not just a pretty story

In a recent media release, Young Media Australia warned parents that the newly released movie *Prince Caspian* is not a film for children. YMA reviewers who create the *Know Before You Go* movie reviews have found that although the film is based on the timeless and beautifully crafted children's story by C. S. Lewis, it has been made unsuitable for children by violence which is continuous from beginning to end.

Jane Roberts, YMA President, cautioned parents saying, "Please be aware that *Prince Caspian*, while it has the beautiful scenery and outstanding special effects that will be enjoyed by many older teenagers and adults, is not a film for young children. It was given an M rating by the Classification Board for 'frequent battle violence'. It is disappointing that the story, with appealing characters and engaging plot, has been reduced to a formula of violent battle scenes and scary villains at the expense of other elements of good storytelling."

Elizabeth Handsley, YMA Vice President, agreed. "Young Media Australia has noted that in the last couple of years there has been a trend for movie-makers to turn children's books into M rated movies. The most worrying aspect of this is that busy parents may be caught off guard and assume that these movies will be suitable for their young children."

Ms Roberts concluded "We wonder why movie makers are making fewer movies rated G and PG, when there are still substantial profits to be made from movies that provide enjoyable viewing experiences for the whole family." A recent article in *The Independent* by Caroline Elliott reported research which showed that films with the UK equivalent of a G classification enjoy more than 68% higher revenues than films with other classifications. This popularity seemed to be independent of strong media backing.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/revealed-how-to-make-your-movie-a-box-office-smash-842662.html>

Meanwhile YMA heard from a concerned

South Australian parent that her daughter's Grade 6 primary school class were being taken to the film. The school had originally been told that the film would be rated PG and when they found out the actual classification, made the decision to retain their booking and promoted the film's positive aspects to the parents when asking them to give permission for their children to attend.

Inquiries to the SA Department of Education and Children's Services have revealed that there is no definite policy on taking children to M rated films, despite the Australian Classification Board guideline that material classified M is not recommended for persons under 15 years of age. YMA were informed that making decisions to take children to see films is very much about the context, individual beliefs and attitudes, and informed consent when that is deemed appropriate. It is not known whether the teachers involved have actually seen the film.

Playing online

Websites suitable for young children are becoming the subject of increasing scrutiny by the media and researchers.

In a recent article in *The Age*, Lia Timson points out that deciding which websites are OK for their children can be confusing for parents, with children finding out about both suitable and unsuitable sites from their friends and siblings. Her article highlights the good and not so good features of a number of sites which young Australian children are visiting:

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/web/cyber-playgrounds/2008/06/11/1212863654396.html?page=fullpage#contentSwap2>

A recent US report by *Consumer Webwatch* has found that children as young as 2½ are being exposed to Internet content, either directly or by watching older siblings or parents. Their exploration of popular websites for children found that the Internet is a highly commercial medium.

Most of the sites observed for this study promote consumerism. No site or service

observed for the study was completely free of brand names, logos, licensed characters, underwriters or sponsors.

Researchers found that web sites frequently persuade children to make purchases by presenting enticing options and even threats that their online creations will become inaccessible.

Subtle branding techniques are often used. For example, the online site for Rescue Pets toys offers an online version of the game "Concentration," with its logos on the back of each card and in a Webkinz bowling game, the site's logo appears on the rack that clears the pins.

The games observed varied widely in quality, educational value, and developmental match with children's abilities.

The Consumer Webwatch report, *Like Taking Candy From a Baby: How Young Children Interact with Online Environments*, is available online at <http://www.consumerwebwatch.org/pdfs/kidsonline.pdf>

Appendix II of the report: 'A closer look at kids online destinations' is an excellent US review of popular children's websites. It is available as a PDF document on the YMA website at http://www.youngmedia.org.au/pdf/kidsonline_websites.pdf

**The Federal Attorney General's
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**[http://www.ag.gov.au/www/
agd/agd.nsf/Page/About_the_
DepartmentEmployment](http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/About_the_DepartmentEmployment)**

PRINCE CASPIAN

PLAYING ONLINE

CLASSIFICATION BOARD

SEXUALISATION OF CHILDREN

FILM MARKETING

ACMA FINDS BREACH



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small screen

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Australian children.

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EDITORIAL

Those of us who have had longstanding concerns about children's well-being and the media, find it ironic that the Bill Henson photos of naked 13 year old girls are receiving so much media attention. Where is the equivalent media interest in the ongoing and increasing sexualisation of young children in the media by corporations?

The Henson photos raised important issues beyond whether the photos would be judged pornographic. Children's protection professionals have rightly questioned the ability of minors to give informed consent to being photographed in that way, and the possible use of the images by paedophiles. Others have focussed on the legality of such portrayals (given the prohibition in the Classification Guidelines for Publications [3] of "sexualised nudity involving minors"), and their artistic merit.

Thirty children's professionals were sufficiently concerned about the issue of consent to write to The Australian, saying "In our view, the issue is not about art versus pornography, nor is it about 'censorship'. The central issues are the exploitation of children and young people and their ability to give consent. It is also our view that parents do not have the right to give consent to such activities on behalf of their children."

Steve Biddulph wrote a feature piece in The Age saying, "Teenage children are developmentally fragile. They try on any number of selves, and have to be free to do so, without adult predation on their bodies or minds. What might seem cool and exciting one day to a teenager, they would regard with horror and embarrassment on another day and at another time. That's why consent is not a justification,

as it is almost impossible for a young person to separate their own feelings from those around them, and they depend on adults to both affirm them, and yet give them space to unfold who they are, a process taking many years."



Barbara Biggins
OAM
Hon CEO

The issues here are serious, but Henson's photos are just the work of one individual, and it's far easier to take on an art gallery than the massive retailing and other corporations who are marketing to children continuously. The possible harm to the girls who posed for the photographs is of course, a legitimate concern, but where is the media outrage about the harm to thousands and possibly millions of even younger children affected by sexualised marketing?

As Steve Biddulph says "The term "corporate pedophile" has gained wide currency in recognising that harm comes at children from many angles, and the business world is increasingly one of these. Some show a sociopathic lack of concern for the outcomes. Big Tobacco continues to target children in the Third World, while knowing its products will kill one-in-eight of their users. There is no place in the corporate structure for someone who asks the "is this wrong" question. Here in Australia, parents have applauded campaigns to desexualise advertising and make the public domain a child-friendly place." The recent Senate Inquiry into the sexualisation of children in contemporary media is expected to report to the Senate on June 23.

YMA awaits this report with interest.

Classification amendment bill before Senate

The Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Amendment (Assessments and Advertising) Bill 2008 is due for debate in the Senate shortly. YMA is opposed to most of these amendments.

Overall, the underlying basis of most of the amendments seems to be that it's desirable for the industry, both TV and film, to be allowed to have a greater role in classification. Where has there been public debate about whether it is a good thing for film distributors to have greater freedom to show trailers of "yet to be classified films". Why are TV stations to be given a greater role in the classification of TV series coming out as DVD box sets?

These proposals follow hard on the heels of the removal of any policy function from the OFLC to the Attorney General's Department before June 30 last year, and its reduction to being just a classification unit (the Classification Board).

The Classification Board is independent, set up and resourced to classify films, games and publications for national consumption,

and has independent review processes, and YMA can see no reason why the industry is to be given a greater role. The Board is quite capable and has sufficient resources. It doesn't need industry recommendations as to classification, which imply that the Board hasn't the time or resources to do the job fully. YMA can see no justification for this move.

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Clips 'n' Cuts

small screen no. 242 May 2008

How can a 13-year-old give informed consent?

THE moral question at the centre of the Bill Henson censorship controversy is whether a 13-year-old person can give informed consent to being photographed naked and having her image reproduced for public viewing. If the answer to that question is "No", then questions about whether the image is beautiful or revolting, or art or pornography, or what Bill Henson's intentions were, or the dimensions of his reputation as an artist, or even whether the parents gave consent, are all utterly irrelevant to consideration of the permissibility of Henson's actions.

This is not primarily about censorship or what anyone has a right to exhibit or see. It's about the extent to which a decent society should protect its young people. When Henson's supporters fail to see this, they concede the moral high ground to politicians and other philistines who conflate condemnation of the exploitation of young people with dubious judgments about artistic merit.

Jim Baxendale
Whitlands, Vic

PUT bluntly, there is nothing "edgy" about photographing naked barely-teens and there's no insight into the human condition to be gleaned from their prosaic and doleful poses. Those who would claim otherwise bring incredulity to the precipice, not art.

Barry Jiggins
Edge Hill, Qld

THE current debate about art versus pornography is missing the point. It doesn't matter whether law-abiding citizens regard Bill Henson's photographs as art or pornography (and it's an argument no one can win, as it's about perception). The point is, pedophiles will view these pictures for sexual titillation or gratification. What parent in their right mind would want that for their child? And speaking of the child in question, nude images of this child are in the public domain for ever more, at an age when the child could not give reasoned consent. Abuse is always about the misuse of power. Those entrusted with the care of this child misused their power.

Alison Nicholls
Taperoo, SA

AS the father of a much-loved daughter, I certainly have more than reservations about anyone photographing her, at any age, unclothed. However, I'm puzzled by the sudden outburst of moral outrage at the work of the esteemed artist Bill Henson. We are bombarded with sexual images of very young women by the commercial outlets selling clothes, much of which is fairly or even overtly explicit and all of it is for profit and exploitation. Many of the models used in advertising young women's clothes certainly look very young. Similarly, I'm astounded that I can see baby boys sitting on the toilet as part of an advertisement for toilet paper, and so on. Such images are equally open to pedophiles to exploit. I don't hear a peep of protest from anyone. Why? All this is far more degrading and immoral than anything Henson has done.

Robert Walker
School of English, Media and Performing Arts, University of NSW

The Australian, 27 May 2008

In The Night Garden ABC1, 9am

What do two-year-olds enjoy? Hallucinogenic escapades with no plot, apparently. That's the conclusion I draw from the success of *Teletubbies*. And from this, from two *Teletubbies* creators, Anne Wood and Andrew Davenport. Yet again jaunty sounds and psychedelic hues combine in a confection aimed at one- to four-year-olds.

Narrated by the mellifluous Derek Jacobi, the series is set in a forest that is, according to the publicity material, a "magical picture-book place that exists between waking and sleeping in a child's imagination". The characters include Upsy Daisy, a chirpy dancing dolly; Igglepiggle, a blue bloke who bounces about with a red blanket; Makka Pakka, seemingly a beige, benign alien; and the Tombliboos and Haahoos, who obviously survived an explosion at a paint factory. It amounts to a nonsensical nursery rhyme: gentle, rhythmic, rhyming, silly and musical.

But wait, should one- to four-year-olds be watching TV in the first place? On ABC radio recently Professor Dimitri Christakis from Seattle's University of Washington quoted research that kids under two shouldn't watch any TV and they should especially avoid fast-paced and violent TV. Even for

kids aged three, he said, the research showed a significant link between the amount of rapidly sequenced and violent TV and the potential for future attention problems. By contrast, slower-paced educational TV seemed to have no adverse effects on developing attention spans.

Unlike *Sesame Street* or *Dora The Explorer*, this show doesn't encourage its viewers to practise numbers or the alphabet. It does, however, have a soothing pace and promotes bedtime and face-washing as pleasant, enjoyable activities. And watching it, my two-year-old banshee was as mellow and transfixed as if someone had slipped a psychotropic substance into her breakfast juice. A psychotropic substance similar to the one Wood and Davenport presumably ingest.

The Sydney Morning Herald, The Guide,

Facebook agrees to protect children

Internet security

FACEBOOK, the world's second-largest social networking website, will add more than 40 new safeguards to protect young users from sexual predators and cyberbullies.

The changes include banning convicted sex offenders from the site, limiting older users' ability to search online for subscribers under 18 and building a task force seeking ways to better verify users' ages and identities.

"The agreement marks another watershed step toward social networking safety, protecting kids from online predators and inappropriate content," said Connecticut Attorney-General Richard Blumenthal, announcing the agreement last week.

Officials from Washington, DC and 49 states have signed on. Texas has not endorsed this agreement or a similar one reached in January among the other states, Washington, DC, and MySpace. Texas officials say they want quicker action on verifying users' ages and identities than the pacts guarantee.

The attorneys-general have been negotiating for months with Facebook and MySpace, the world's largest online social network with 200 million users around the world, for tighter controls.

Facebook has more than 70 million active users worldwide.

Among other changes, Facebook has agreed to ensure companies offering services on its site comply with its safety and privacy guidelines; keep tobacco and alcohol ads from people too young to use them; remove groups whose comments or images suggest they involve incest, pedophilia, bullying; and send warning messages when a child is in danger of giving out personal information.

The protections included in the MySpace and Facebook pacts could be expanded to smaller services such as Friendster and Bebo, Blumenthal said.

AP

The Australian, 13 May 2008

THE TOP 10 CHILDREN'S WEBSITES

Week ending April 26

RANK	NAME	DOMAIN	MARKET SHARE
1	Club Penguin	www.clubpenguin.com	15.01%
2	Neopets	www.neopets.com	9.80%
3	The Playground	abc.net.au/children	3.13%
4	Barbie	www.barbie.com	2.47%
5	CartoonNetwork.com	www.cartoonnetwork.com	2.30%
6	NickJr.com	www.nickjr.com	2.28%
7	LEGO Worlds	www.lego.com	2.11%
8	Disney Online	www.disney.com	2.01%
9	CartoonNetwork.com.au	www.cartoonnetwork.com.au	1.94%
10	Rollercoaster	www.abc.net.au/rollercoaster	1.76%

The Australian, 1 May 2008

Source: Hitwise

Dregs of human endeavour

MAYBE I'm missing something when it comes to the meaning of words and I should defer to the superior understanding of Greg Bondar of the Game Developers Association of Australia ("Grand Theft Auto raises R rating prospect", Media, 15/5), who is quoted as follows: "I think the release of GTAIV is a defining moment; it goes to show how far the games industry has come. He continued: "The ratings system has not kept up."

The content of this so-called game includes sex scenes, graphic sexual violence and drug use. In contrast to Mr Bondar, my reaction to his industry is to think: "How low has the games industry sunk?" I can't believe that this violence and depravity is worth the proverbial tinker's cuss. To actually believe that this material is a high point in human endeavour and a source of entertainment makes me seriously question whether or not we are talking the same language.

All power to the Office of Film Classification for attempting to prevent the worst excesses of the gaming lobby being foisted on the long-suffering public. Condemnation to the games industry for its misplaced attempts to entertain us with the dregs of the human experience and to those state attorneys-general who are attempting to foist this garbage on us.

Ken Francis

East Brisbane, Qld

YOUR article indicates that people may try to avoid the Australian classification rules by buying *Grand Theft Auto IV* over the internet from overseas distributors. Your readers should be aware that any material refused classification by the Classification Board is treated by Customs as a prohibited import.

Customs, along with its partner agencies, x-rays 100 per cent of incoming international mail, so the likelihood of detection is high. The importation of material that has been refused classification is illegal and Customs is able to detect attempts to bring such computer games into Australia.

John Potter

Acting national manager
Trade Policy and Regulation Branch
Australian Customs Service

The Australian, 16 May 2008

Grand Theft Auto raises R rating prospect

Simon Canning

THE federal Government could approve an R rating category for the computer and video game industry by the end of the year in the wake of debate over the censorship of the contentious game *Grand Theft Auto IV*.

The Office of Film and Literature Classification ordered sex scenes to be cut from the game for it to meet the highest available rating for computer games, MA15+. While the sex scenes have been edited out of the Australian version, graphic violence and drug use — a central element of the GTA series — remain untouched.

Greg Bondar, chief executive of the Game Developers Association of Australia, said he believed the furore over the rating of the game had taken the debate to a

new level that would force the Government's hand.

In March, more than two months before the release of the game, Home Affairs Minister Bob Debus announced a review of the games classification system to be administered by the Victorian Attorney-General.

South Australia is believed to be the only state that has consistently opposed an R rating for games.

A discussion paper on the review is expected to be released in coming weeks.

"I think the release of GTA IV is a defining moment; it goes to show how far the games industry has come," Mr Bondar said.

"The ratings system has not kept up."

The push for a broader ratings system is also being spearheaded

by the Interactive Entertainment Association of Australia, which is calling for a common ratings system across movies and games.

IEA chief executive Ron Curry said he believed the industry had reached a tipping point based on the broader acceptance of games as entertainment on a par with films and television.

"Anecdotally, there was always a lot of hostility towards the classifications, but that is softening now as people are becoming more comfortable with games as just another form of media," Mr Curry said.

The IEAA has released research by Bond University showing the average age of game players had risen to 28, with 8 per cent over 60.

In 2006 the OFLC classified 753 games, with 46 per cent rated

G, 24 per cent PG, 16 per cent M and 14 per cent MA15+.

According to the research, 62 per cent of people said a games classification had no influence on their buying decision, but it also found there was mass confusion about the differences between M and MA15+ ratings, with 32 per cent believing that MA15+ signified a game was meant only for people 18 or older.

"It is logical that a common classification system for games and film would help parents make informed entertainment choices," the report says.

Other research has found 88 per cent of people support a common classification system that would include an R rating.

Gaming websites have been flooded in recent weeks by people saying they will sidestep

ensure children developed healthy eating habits.

Resisting temptation is one of life's lessons. By asking for a tougher regulation, parents are asking the state to let them off the hook. Keeping junk food out of the mouths of children is the responsibility of parent's who must decide what food is appropriate and what is not. For *Choice*, KFC sponsorship of the cricket is a bad example and chocolate eggs should not include a plastic toy. If parents don't like the advertisements their children are watching on television, they should turn it off and order their children outside to play.

The signs are growing that the Rudd Government is a willing proponent of the nanny state. Parents should not be fooled into believing that any government can do everything for them.

The Australian, 19 May 2008

THANK you, Deborah Hope, for your column on reading books aloud and for the entertainment of children (*Review*, April 26-27). It has restored my faith in the power of the written word. All the titles you referred to were also on my list. As a school teacher, I often despair when I realise that so many parents do not read for themselves, let alone for their children. Thank goodness there are still some of us around. I know my children will instil the tradition of reading aloud to their children. Making movies in your head as you listen to a book is creativity at its best.

Teresa Restall

Southport, Queensland

The Weekend Australian, 3-4 May 2008

the local classification by buying the game online from overseas distributors, something of which Mr Curry said he was aware.

"I'm seeing it on websites and people I meet are telling me they are going to get the game overseas," he said.

The push for a quick adoption of a new ratings category for games has also been highlighted by the record-breaking sales of the game, which became the fastest earning entertainment title in history, outstripping the biggest blockbuster films of all time with first week sales of \$530 million.

The success of the game and the local debate over its censorship comes as US games publisher Take 2 Interactive fights a \$US2 billion takeover bid by games giant Electronic Arts.

The Australian, 15 May 2008

Kids and the net - don't go there

Sunday Mail, 4 May 2008

DON'T lie: you have absolutely no idea what your kid is doing on the internet.

But you want to know. Desperately. Not because you are worried as such, but because you just want to know how anybody could possibly consider staring at an LCD screen and typing on a keyboard for three hours straight to be exciting.

Every time you ask your child: "So what is it that you actually do on the interwebs?" they just reply, "Home-work," in a monotonous grunt, and then they tell you to go away.

Let me help you out, bewildered parent. I am going to guide you through Web 2.0, aka "social-networking", aka "those-sites-your-kid-is-always-on-but-won't-tell-you-anything-about".

First stop is MySpace (myspace.com). MySpace is sort of like a virtual red light district for teens - completely tasteless, with lots of flashing neon, doof-doof music playing everywhere, and tons of annoying people wearing too little screaming for your attention. "Be my friend!" "No, be MY friend!"

Having a MySpace profile is a stage you go through, and it lasts until the end of high school. At university, it's a bit of a faux pas to have a MySpace

Connor O'Brien



profile, a little immature. Uni students use Facebook (facebook.com) instead, which we think is much more sophisticated.

If your child is between 14 and 17, though, they are smack bang in the middle of the MySpace phase.

You can try to search for your teen's profile, by all means, but if you do happen to find it (which you probably won't, because they have thought long and hard about how to hide it from you), take a deep breath before browsing through it. If you don't, you will have a heart attack. The first thought running through your mind will be, "Oh my God, is my teenager really a promiscuous, self-obsessed, vacuous alcoholic rapper idiot with no grasp of English grammatical conventions?"

There is a little rule of thumb you should use when reading through a MySpace profile: three-quarters of what is written is complete rubbish.

MySpace is a way to impress other teens by pulling out the most unbelievable stories about how many drugs you have taken, how drunk you've gotten, and how completely insane your life is generally. The stories are unbelievable mainly because they aren't true. Your child is white, middle-class, and lives in the suburbs.

Before we leave MySpace, I must warn you: DO NOT set up your own MySpace account and try to friend-request your teen. You will be rejected and everybody at your child's school will laugh at you. For a long time.

If your teen isn't on MySpace, they are on YouTube (youtube.com). A lot has been said about how YouTube represents the future of television. This is a cause for concern, considering that 99 per cent of videos on YouTube are of people getting kicked in the crotch or falling off children's swing-sets.

The quality of YouTube videos is extremely mediocre but the poor quality doesn't make it any less addictive. You can upload videos quite easily, too, so if your teen is standing in front of you holding a digital camera of any description, cover your face and run.

Connor O'Brien is studying law/arts at the University of Adelaide

SOUTH Australian Premier Mike Rann

has announced in Hollywood that Adelaide will establish state-of-the-art studio facilities in Adelaide's Glenside redevelopment. The \$43 million studio will include two sound stages (of 1000m sq and 400m sq), a 1000m sq construction space, production and post-production facilities and a screening theatre. "I thought it was very important to bring the film hub, with its new sound and production facilities, within close proximity to the city and nearer to more than 30 film production companies located in the Norwood/Kent Town area, the CBD and North Adelaide," Rann says. The studio will also be the new home of the South Australian Film Commission and build on the "film centre" focus it created in Hendon. But it will remain a boutique studio catering to the independent sector rather than international blockbusters. The biggest sound stage, for instance, is one-third the size of the biggest stages at Sydney's Fox Studios Australia. "It's not going to be anything like Fox Studios or (Gold Coast's) Warner Roadshow Studios; they'll be more complementary than competitive," says SAFC chief executive **Richard Harris**. "We'll be improving on what we've got without becoming too enormous. This isn't about trying to get the next *Matrix* or *Superman* movie, it's about South Australia continuing to build on its niche for independent filmmaking."

The Australian, 21 May 2008

If just one doubts...

IT WAS a relief to see Steve Biddulph's article discussing the fragility of the pre-adolescent stage of development.

All I have heard is the outrage of art lovers and Bill Henson, and the recollections of a 30-something one-time model of Henson who is unrepresentative of adolescents.

I work with such girls every day, and to find one who has not been affected or confused by the contradictions in society about women, sexuality and body image is extremely rare.

I think Bill Henson's art is beautiful and, yes, it captures the vulnerability of pre-adolescence — that is because they are vulnerable and he is exposing this. I cannot think of one adolescent girl, no matter how confident, no matter how well schooled in art appreciation, who would not feel some level of discomfort and vulnerability by being placed in the position of nude model to a relative stranger, no matter how respectful his approach.

Steve Biddulph is right — how tragic a society are we if we do not protect our children due to egotistical adult pursuits.

If just one of Henson's models ever felt even slightly uncomfortable, that makes his work immoral and nobody else's rights are relevant.

Anne Dunell, Essendon

The Age, 29 May 2008

Video game to help shed kilos



JORDANNA SCHRIEVER

IT IS supposed to stop gamers turning into couch potatoes and even a gym junkie was sweating after 20 minutes with the new Nintendo Wii Fit.

The gaming giant's latest game, which uses a motion-sensitive balance board with four sensors to monitor movement, has gone on

sale in Australia. *The Advertiser* asked Marion Fitness Centre gym instructor Amanda Digiusto, 38, and self-confessed gym junkie Heidi Varga, 29, to test its capabilities.

"You can really feel it and it's a lot of fun," Ms Varga said. "I go to the gym every day but this is something I could do at home with my

partner, who doesn't want to come to the gym."

Ms Digiusto said the game would suit people intimidated by the gym.

"It would be great for people who weren't comfortable coming into a gym environment," she said. "It's good, you could definitely get a form of exercise from that, which

would be better than doing nothing while playing games." Ms Digiusto said the game also accurately showed how to complete the exercises.

The game has more than 40 exercises across four categories: balance games, muscle workouts, yoga and aerobics. It measures a player's body mass index

and centre of gravity to determine the best workout. Players can choose from two on-screen instructors who demonstrate how to do each exercise.

The game also records the progress of up to eight people and unlocks additional exercises as you go. Gametraders national marketing manager Chad

Polley expected the game to sell out within two weeks. "Nintendo are promoting active gaming through a variety of games including boxing and tennis," he said.

"Parents are quite happy to buy them for their kids because they are promoting being active."

The Advertiser, 10 May 2008

It's the corporate in pedophilia that they really object to

A 2006 report by the Australia Institute on the sexualisation of children was horrified at girls modelling clothes

IN one advertisement a girl apparently aged about 10 wears a chain pulled like a choker around her neck, with the ends dangling where her cleavage would be if she were older. Her hot-pink tank-top and black trousers hang slightly loosely from her child's frame. Two belts hold the trousers up, with another chain hanging from a belt loop. An outsized ring on one of her fingers dominates one hand, and she wears pink lipstick and a pink velvet cap. She adopts the female full-frontal pose, which is familiar to us from images of adult women models: the head is tilted and turned to one side, the shoulders are tilted one way, and the hips the other.

In a woman, the effect of the outfit and the pose would be to draw attention to the features that signal women's sexual difference from men, in particular the breasts, waist and hips, as well as the lack of body hair. The lipstick would be widely considered attractive on a woman, but the evolutionary basis for this is that it mimics the increased blood flow to the mucous membranes when humans are sexually aroused.

That a pre-pubescent child is presented in this way to sell a product strikes many as grotesque, and that the product is an eau de toilette directed at girls of primary school age only heightens the incongruity.



CUT & PASTE

But the former executive director of the Australia Institute, Clive Hamilton, on ABC's PM on Friday, is much more tolerant of girls modelling nude for Bill Henson:

YOU know, arguably (Bill Henson) and the gallery owners are innocent victims, but they should have known better.

They should have been aware that the way children have been presented in recent years is bound to create difficulties when you present them — not in an eroticised way, I'd stress, the pictures aren't in any sense pornographic — but the context makes the presentation of children in the nude, you know, troubling.

If we imagine going back 30 years and this sort of exhibition being put on in a gallery and it was seen by its intended audience — that is, those who have presumably a sophisticated appreciation of photography as art — then I certainly wouldn't have a problem with it.

But when the same pictures become consumed, if I can use that commodified term, by a range of people for quite different and unintended reasons which will have impacts on

the child models in question, through the internet, then I think there are serious worries about that.

And yet it seems to me that the adults around her who have her interests at heart and organised, approved the exhibition, were not fully aware of these dangers and have probably caused that child some damage.

The Australian, 27 May 2008

Television permits no longer a licence to print money

Sally Jackson

Alternative media have cut the value of commercial licences

THE value of commercial TV licences has been slashed by nearly \$2 billion since 2003-04 as network audiences defect to the internet and pay-TV, according to an analysis by the media regulator, the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Annual licence fees are calculated at 9 per cent of a broadcaster's gross revenue.

The devaluation began in 2003-04, with a sharp fall in 2005-06 revenues leaving average licences worth less than a decade ago and approaching the levels of the 1980s.

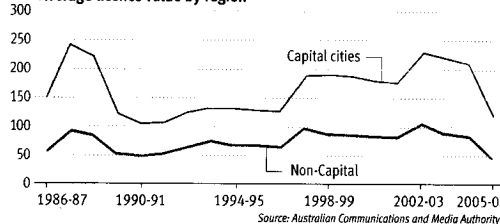
The average value of a capital city licence in 2005-06 was about \$120 million, down from about \$230 million in 2003-04.

For a non-capital city licence it was about \$50 million, down from about \$90 million two years earlier. PBL Media's Nine Network was responsible for the largest licence devaluations, although Ten had also devalued its licences in 2005-06.

"Historically, a commercial television broadcasting licence

LICENSED TO THRILL

Average licence value by region



Source: Australian Communications and Media Authority

gave its owner unprecedented access to the Australian public and the right to sell that access to advertisers," the report said.

"Since 2000, however, alternatives to TV, including the internet, subscription television, DVDs and games, have gained in popularity, attracting both new audience and advertisers."

But the report also said licences might have been overvalued in the 1980s, whereas "since

2002-03, amortised profits and licence fees have been very similar, suggesting that licensees may have been more conscious of the values of their broadcast licence assets".

The report covers financial trends in the commercial TV industry over 27 years from 1978-79 to 2005-06, updating a 2001 report by its predecessor, the Australian Broadcasting Authority.

The Australian, 12 May 2008

It found that although new services, such as the internet and pay-TV, might have driven some growth in the overall audience for screen media, "their existence puts pressure on the size of the commercial television audience, and may affect revenue and future profit growth".

Between 1980 and 2000, commercial TV revenues grew faster than the Australian economy, increasing by 3.8 per cent while GDP growth averaged 3.2 per cent in real terms.

Since 2000, however, average annual revenue growth had slowed to 0.6 per cent. In 2005-06, commercial TV reported revenues of \$3.989 billion, which was only the third time nominal revenue had fallen from the previous year since 1978-79.

"The 2005-06 fall may be due to increased competition, as subscription television and new media attracted advertising expenditure away from commercial television," the report said.

Profits before interest and tax

were also declining, falling by 29.2 per cent in capital cities and 4.7 per cent in non-capital cities over the past two years.

In comparison, between 1987 and 2006, profits grew by 27.8 per cent a year in the capital cities and 4.6 per cent in the non-capital cities. Meanwhile, expenditure had continued to increase, reaching \$3.623 billion in 2005-06, with capital-city licensees accounting for \$2.899 billion.

The report said Nine had been the most profitable network between 1979 and 2006 but the relative positions of the networks were changing, with Seven and Ten now outpacing it in annual revenue growth. Expenditure comparisons also suggested Nine had significantly higher overheads than Seven but that the two networks spent similar amounts on programming.

The report said the financial impact of last year's media ownership rule changes should become apparent later this year when the 2006-07 data became available.

Monday Media — Page 35

Big majority of parents want junk food ads banned

John Stapleton

THE vast majority of parents support a ban on advertising junk food to children, particularly on television, according to a new survey.

Consumer group Choice released research yesterday showing parents believed the advertising was undermining their efforts to teach children good eating habits.

The ban is supported by the community group The Parents Jury, which has waged a long campaign on the issue.

Responding to a Newspoll survey, 88 per cent of parents said the advertising and marketing of junk food made their role more difficult.

The findings coincided with Choice's release of an illustrated storybook called *Fed Up: A Tale of Junk Food Marketing*. The publication, utilising the Newspoll research, documents the "pester power" of



Helping hand: Penny Bitzel and Gary Vaughan with daughters Abby and Alicia

children. The Newspoll survey also found 82 per cent of parents had experienced their child asking for food or drink because they had seen it advertised.

The results are to be presented at a World Health Assembly conference in Geneva this week by Choice chief executive Peter Kell.

"Parents are in favour of increased

government regulation over the way high sugar and fat foods are marketed to children," he said. "It's time for governments to act."

Penny Bitzel, 39, who was at a children's birthday party in Sydney's Centennial Park with her daughters Alicia, 5 and Abby, 7, yesterday backed the findings. Ms Bitzel said parents were sick of having to fight propaganda from a cashed-up international junk food industry.

Many parents, including herself, were tightly controlling their children's access to television shows because of the advertising.

"This is not about promoting a nanny state," she said. "Banning junk food advertising is about helping parents by not actively working against what they are trying to do and not undermining the healthy messages they are trying to give their kids."

Ms Bitzel said the pernicious

advertising of junk food did nothing for the health of their children, while overworked parents needed strength and energy to combat the pestering created by it.

"The most powerful images we retain in our lives are the ones we get as children. Parents should be taking advantage of this, because the junk food industry certainly is," she said.

Justine Hodge, a spokeswoman for The Parents Jury, said the group "absolutely" supported the call for a ban on junk food advertising to children.

"Our membership has repeatedly told us this is their number one concern," she said. "The continual, repetitive advertising of these unhealthy foods is making it very difficult for families to make healthy food choices."

"It is very detrimental and very unfair."

Editorial — Page 9

The Australian, 19 May 2008

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Fright-free Fight-free Viewing

A resource for parents of under seven year olds



The package includes a 5 minute DVD, booklet and Parent Information Session training notes. It discusses how violent media can affect children under seven, gives practical tips for reducing the impact and supplies a list of 200 non-violent media titles for under seven year olds.

Produced by YMA with funding from the Federal Government's National Community Crime Prevention Program, the package is now available from South Australian public libraries, schools, kindergartens, child care centres or community centres.

Inquiries:
helpline@youngmedia.org.au

*Class of 3000; Ed, Edd n Eddy; Naruto;
The Life and Times of Juniper Lee.*