

# [Censorship and the functions of media classification systems assignment](https://assignbuster.com/censorship-and-the-functions-of-media-classification-systems-assignment/)

Historically there were laws defining what could and couldn’t be contained within a live performance, the traditional culture of public entertainment, however the advent Of radio, film, recorded sound, elevation and eventually video, video gaming DVD’s and the internet, presented an entirely new set of challenges to those in charge of Media Classification Systems.

Past censorship of books and other publications was a relatively simple matter however the broadening definition of entertainment and the massive social upheavals occurring during the birth of the broadcast industry meant that societies and their governing censorship bodies had to scramble to keep pace with not only moral and religious regulations but also the exposure to the broader public of these new forms of media.

Previously, the banning or restricted availability of books or publications affected only a small percentage of the population who were literate and could afford such luxuries however the “ mass appeal” of radio and films meant that, as class barriers were broken down and standards of living increased, censorship and classification applied to the entire populace. Censorship and classification differ in the following ways; censorship is defined as “ the practice of officially examining books, movies, etc. And suppressing unacceptable parts” [1] whereas Media Classification Systems in Australia define themselves on their website as “ The Classification Board is a statutory body which makes classification decisions for films, computer games and certain publications. The Classification Board is a full-time Board based in Sydney. Principles for decision-making are set out in the National Classification Code, agreed by the Australian Government and the States and Territories. The Classification Board is independent from government. [2] Whilst the work of Media Classification involves an element of censorship, its role is primarily concerned with providing appropriate classification of media o better inform the choices of consumers. This process has assumed greater importance with the evolution of media consumption from product administered by others (I. E. : a cinema requiring proof Of age via identification for the viewing of an RI 8+ film) to online or streaming media content that is accessed via the internet, often without restriction.

Restricting youth access to media content accessed via the internet and television viewing is now the responsibility of parents via internet filters and parental locks installed on hardware. A work of art or media product has been censored if a compromise was made o suit a classification system or governing body, if a shot in a movie or words in a book or an image been cut out in a way the Author or producer did not want changed then censorship has happened.

The first real censorship on certain films were carried out by the chief secretary’s department, Federal Minister Don Chip introduced an R-rating system in Australia in 1971 to accommodate the changing times. Consider the film ‘ Solo’ or ‘ Solo o lee 120 Georgian did Soda’ (1975) directed by Italian filmmaker Pier Paolo Passions, based on the book ‘ The 120 Days of Stood’ by the notorious French libertine the Marquis De Eased (itself not leased to the public for almost 200 years due to it’s controversial content) Although released in Paris in 1975, in Australia Solo was banned from 1976 for almost twenty years.

Depicting a wartime re-conceptualization of De Jade’s tale of sexual gratification and horror merged with Dent’s vision of Hell, it was considered obscene and was denied a classification and release by the Australian Classification Board (CAB) until 1993. It was then given an RI 8+ rating and deemed fit for public consumption under that rating until 1 998 when the CAB again re-banned it.

A modified DVD version was submitted unsuccessfully for classification in 2008 causing outcry from certain sectors of the public not only for the perceived freedom of speech restrictions but the artistic censorship of the DVD version that compromised the artistic expression Of the original work. In 2010 Solo finally received a DVD release classification under an RI 8+ rating dependent on the inclusion of three hours of extra footage. It could be inferred that the Australian version of Media Classification is fluid and perhaps reflects both the political climate and a changing attitude of the general public towards such controversial films.

An examination of federal politics of the times reveals that Solo was banned under a Liberal government and stayed that way until the lifting of the ban occurred under Labor leaders, the re-banning at a time of Liberal power and the freedom to view the film once more during a period of Labor governance. Although demonstrating a link between a left or right wing government and Media Classification, Solo’s history in Australia perhaps better reflects an ever- changing criteria upon which the CA base their classifications and a struggle to reflect the publics wishes on this matter.

Ironically, Solo is now considered almost a classic in artistic circles and remains (in)famous as much as a test case for censorship and classification as an obscene piece of filmmaker. An examination of films banned or classified RI 8+ by the CAB over the decades demonstrates the changing concerns that govern a film’s release, many with reference to influence on youth. On Australian television, cultural considerations sometimes augment classification and warnings.

On BBC n” and CBS TV, warnings are issued prior to viewing particular content in relation to Indigenous Australian culture, such as: “ Aboriginal and Tortes Strait Islander viewers are advised that the allowing program contains images and voices of people who have died. ” [3] This respects the Indigenous Australian custom of honoring the deceased by not directly naming a person after death which in modern times has come to include the avoidance of the broadcast or publication of images and recordings of the deceased. 4] Most recently in Australia there was controversy when an Australian Radio personality made a prank phonically to the nurse of Kate Middleton in relation to her being pregnant; the incident Went bad and the nurse had committed suicide. After the arrival of film technology in the late sass’s Australia accepted the ewe invention enthusiastically, and experienced a time of swift development in the industry. The Australian film industry became one of the most influential film industries in the world. In the very early part of the 20th century there was a full length movie of, The Story of the Kelly Gang by the Await Brothers.

Unfortunately authorities at the time did not approve of the bushmaster stories and it was banned in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales for five years. This film was done during the silent period. In 191 1 Australian produced more feature films than any other country. American and British companies took over distribution and often they would not show local films, from 1922 – 23 the vast majority of films were from America. Between 1 952 and 1966 there were an average of two films made in Australia.

In 1 956 with the advent of Television the film industry felt threatened, but as it turned out, the Australian requirements which were compulsory for advertising standards provided more opportunities for film makers because commercials shown on television where to be filmed in Australia by Australians. Australian film industry was not going to well under the old-fashioned rule of rime Minister Robert Enemies, the film industry was damaged between the 1959 – 56 the were no feature films were produced the industry was compromised due to the lack of government understanding and American cultural imperialism and productions by foreigners.

Prime Minister John Gorton revived the film industry and created the Australian Film Development Corporation and injects one hundred thousand dollars in the fund which creates the Australian Film and Television School (AFT S, which opened in 1973 between 1 970 and 1 985 Australia produced over 400 feature film which was more than ever before and also new talented reducers, such as, Peter Weir, Fred Sheepish and Phil Nonce, actors emerged to name a few, Mel Gibson, Judy Davis and Sam Neil.

The Australian Classification Board (CAB) says that the three essential principles for the Boards Classification systems, \* The importance of context \* Assessing Impact \* The Six classifiable elements 1) Themes 2) Violence 3) sex 4) Language 5) Drug Use 6) Nudity The CAB criteria reflect the concerns of a modern society that classes the risk of depiction of language, drug use and nudity to be less than that of themes, violence and sex. 1908 Theatre and Public Halls Act, This was done in response to the belief hat films were causing a rise in Juvenile behavior.

Public demand for wider regulations were based on the view that the cinema was exceptionally bad influence for people in society and that people deemed to have a low self control would copy what was on screen. Due to Australia’s history on censorship a lot of films have tried to come into this country illegally. Through out the Twentieth century, and even earlier, we can go as far back as Plato people have attempted to publicly control and even censor access to various artifacts of mass culture; this includes poetry, music, movies, film, elevation, comic books and books.

There reason is to protect young persons from perceived effects and to promote standards founded on Christian principles. In Australia the Classification in its early stages Of the Twentieth century were done by the police. Australia’s film history can be dated back to the late 19th century. Every country has it’s own censorship system. In some countries censorship can be promoted by its own value system.

China is influenced by politics, Saudi Arabia by religion there was an uproar from the Middle East and even threats to producers if the showed the face of one of there prophets Mohammed on South park. Cultural and historical factors also affect how a government treats it’s citizens to what access is available to them. Some European countries have virtually no restrictions on what films can be seen but there seems to be a universal ban on films that exploit children sexually.