[GB] British Board Of Film Classification Publishes its Annual Report

IRIS 1999-6:1/30

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The 1998 Annual Report of the BBFC has just been published. Marking his retirement after 24 years, the outgoing Director, James Ferman, writes that the most important achievement has been the formulation of a clear set of principles and policies; the key issue of his term is said to be violence, particularly sexual violence. The principles and procedures have now been codified into the "Classification Guidelines" (see Appendix 1 of the Report). The BBFC has also increased its commitment to transparency, by publishing press releases explaining "controversial or highprofile" decisions. A new "Advisory Panel on Childrens' Viewing" is being set up, constituting a panel of 12 members. Statistics reveal that 393 cinema features were classified (of which cuts were ordered to be made in respect of 14, 3.6 %); 3823 certificates were issued (or refused) for videos, with 325 requiring cuts; and 41 digital works were classified (27 computer games and 14 interactive CD-Roms). The Board is concerned about the challenge posed by DVD for classification. Five videos were rejected, but one producer appealed successfully to the Video Appeals Committee.

BBFC Annual Report for 1998.

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