[IE] Film Censor Publishes Report on Adolescents and Film

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On 1 February 2005 the Irish Film Censor's Office (IFCO) published a report on adolescent film usage and attitudes. This is the second phase of a research project commissioned by IFCO. The results of the first phase on Parental Usage and Attitudes to Film Classification was published in September 2004 (See IRIS 2004-9: 13).The report details the findings of a survey conduced among 1,045 adolescents (aged 12-17 years), as well as small-group interviews with twenty-four adolescents. Key findings of the research were as follows:

- A large percentage of adolescents (up to 87%) watch films on a regular basis, whether in the cinema or on television, DVD or video, usually in the company of family or friends. They reported that parents played quite an active role in their film viewing. Adolescents frequently discussed films with their parents, especially after viewing, rather than prior to viewing. Many parents checked the classification certificate of films

- A large number of adolescents consider film classification a good idea, and use it when selecting films. More than half felt that the IFCO classification is too strict while a small minority felt that it was sometimes too lenient. However there were conflicting opinions on which films were wrongly classified. Some changes have in fact been made to film classification since the research was conducted last summer (see IRIS 2005-2: 17).- Adolescents had a good grasp of the classification system; the earlier survey of parents had found some confusion about the terminology involved.

- Adolescents were most concerned about the depiction of hard drugs in films: this coincides with the survey of parents. Stylised violence (as distinct from realistic violence) and the use of swear words caused adolescents the least offence.

- A large percentage said they had seen films for age groups older than their own. This usually took place in the domestic environment rather than in the cinema.

- A sizeable minority said they had seen a film that had scared them and that they wished they had not seen. Of these adolescents, a large majority said they would find a grid system giving more information on the type of film helpful. Such a grid system is now available on the Office's website.

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Film Censor: survey of adolescents

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