

No. 277 July 2011

**July : Classification month!**

July 15 was the closing date for submissions to both the Australian Law Reform Commission’s Review of the Australian Classification Scheme, and the Federal Minister for Home Affairs’ consultation on his proposals for a separate system for classifying computer games. On July 22, ACCM’s President Prof Elizabeth Handsley and CEO Barbara Biggins met with the ALRC President Rosalind Croucher and the Inquiry Chairman Prof Terry Flew to discuss classification issues.

ACCM’s major arguments to the ALRC Review were that the classification system must be evidence-based, independently (not industry) constructed and applied, and applied to all media as far as possible consistent with other aims. With regard to the existing framework, ACCM thought that these key elements are worth having:

- The existing principles on which the NCS is based: adult freedom; children’s protection; protection for all from inadvertent exposure to offensive material; community concerns about violence, sexual violence, demeaning depictions
- National approaches to the classification of films, computer games and publications
- Independent and consistent application of the classification criteria by a well trained government agency
- A review process accessible by all

And that these elements are not:

- Too many categories centred around the age of 15 years
- Classification categories and criteria that are not evidence –based
- Over-reliance on context and impact to determine classification category
- Self regulation of TV and other media content
- Little effective regulation of internet, mobile phone content
- Different time zones for the same classifications across free to air and digital channels
- Lack of funding put into public education about the worth and meaning of the classification scheme

ACCM recommended a total overhaul of existing categories, as they need to be

based on appropriateness for age levels that represent accepted developmental milestones.

ACCM said the following categories would provide more useful advice to parents:

- G = suits all, including young children
- G8+ = mild impact appropriate for 8 and over
- G13+ = moderate impact appropriate for 13 and over
- MA16+ = strong impact legally restricted to those 16 and over
- R18+ = high impact legally restricted those 18 and over

ACCM’s full submission can be read at: <http://www.childrenandmedia.org.au/publications/submissions.htm>

In response to the publicly released R18+ proposals, ACCM strongly supports the separation of games classification from the system for films. An acceptance of the difference in experience and impact between playing interactive games and watching a movie is reflected in overseas systems such as the European PEGI. ACCM had

argued at the 2001/2 review of classification guidelines in Australia, that the systems should be kept separate. The joint system since 2003 has meant a relaxation of the games guidelines, and has directly lead to the outcry over recent years about the content of MA15+ games.

However, ACCM opposed the proposed criteria for the MA15+ and new R18+ classifications. We said,

*Having carefully reviewed this document we find there to be very little real change to the existing system. Many seemingly new inclusions are mere transfers from the existing preamble; new statements about interactive drug use seem superfluous at lower levels and are missing at R18+ level; the addition of a prohibition on “very” frequent strong and realistic violence at MA15+ level is hardly an effective improvement given that frequency always has been an element that could have been used to make a judgement of high impact. There is little to better protect children.*

ACCM still prefers South Australian Attorney General John Rau’s proposal to move all MA15+ games into the R18+ category.

**Australian Council on Children and the Media**

presents:

**Steve Biddulph**

on

***Raising Girls***

**Monday 26 September 2011**

**7.15pm for 7.30 pm start**

**Immanuel College Auditorium**

**32 Morphett Road, Novar Gardens SA**

*Steve Biddulph’s work on boys has changed how we raise and educate boys. Here’s your chance to hear his new presentation! Steve will talk about what parents, communities and the media need to do to create healthy lives for girls and young women.*

**We regret that no babies or children can be admitted**

**Tickets \$27.50**

**Bookings can be made online at [www.trybooking.com/ucf](http://www.trybooking.com/ucf)**

**For more information, go to [www.childrenandmedia.org.au](http://www.childrenandmedia.org.au) or contact [admin@youngmedia.org.au](mailto:admin@youngmedia.org.au) or PH 08 8376 2111**



no. 277 July 2011

## small screen

Editor: Barbara Biggins OAM

Compiler: Caroline Donald

Editorial Board: Barbara Biggins,  
Jane Roberts, Judy Bundy,  
Elizabeth Handsley.

*small screen* is published at the beginning of each month and reports on the events of the previous month 11 issues per year (Dec/Jan double issue)

Published by

**Australian Council on  
Children and the Media  
(ACCM)**

PO Box 447

Glenelg 5045

South Australia

info@youngmedia.org.au

www.youngmedia.org.au

Tel: +61 8 8376 2111

Fax: +61 8 8376 2122

Helpline: 1800 700 357

ACCM is a national, non-profit community organisation.

Its mission is to promote a quality media environment for Australian children.

No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission of the Editor.

Contributions are welcome.

ACCM's movie review service is supported by a grant from the **South Australian Government**

ACCM's Web Page and Broadband access are supported by its Internet Service Provider

**Internode**

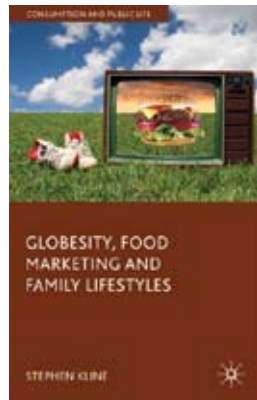
Publication and printing of *small screen* is supported by a donation from **Nickelodeon**



## GUEST REVIEWER

### Book Review

Our guest reviewer is Kaye Mehta, Senior Lecturer in Nutrition and Dietetics, School of Medicine, Flinders University, South Australia



### *Globesity, food marketing & family lifestyles*

Stephen Kline  
Palgrave Macmillan 2011.

This is a book worth reading. It examines a current controversy, food advertising to children as a contributory factor to childhood obesity, from a new angle, namely, risk in modern consumer society. Kline suggests that in market-centred neoliberal society, food advertising communicates risk, by presenting a skewed impression of foods to children and persuading them to desire predominantly unhealthy foods.

The main thrust of the book is an analysis of the 'discursive politics' of childhood obesity as a global phenomenon (globesity). Kline examines the processes and actions that have put this issue on the risk agenda. He describes the use of epidemiology as an advocacy science to communicate the risk of increasing prevalence of overweight among children. In spite of the limitations of epidemiological knowledge, he suggests that politically motivated advocates 'fed' the information to the media to generate 'moral panic' and force governments to consider policy response. In this way, he suggests that public health organisations became 'moral entrepreneurs of child obesity'; in particular he cites the World Health Organisation's campaign to promote awareness of child globesity as a public relations success.

Kline provides a scholarly summary of the evidence on advertising effects on children, and joins with other credible reviews to conclude that TV advertising does indeed influence children's food preferences and consumption behavior, and that age does not protect against these effects. Notwithstanding, he does introduce evidence of limited effects of advertising on children's diets. He critically examines the debate about whether the modern child is a savvy consumer or a vulnerable child, using the ethical frames

of 'informed choice and consent' in consumer decision-making. He concludes that as 'consumers in the making' young children are not fully cognizant of persuasive intent and all children are susceptible to persuasion, therefore, children warrant being treated as special cases, for their vulnerability to be acknowledged, and for them to be protected from the risks communicated by marketing. This is of course, consistent with the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. Therefore Kline supports states enacting precautionary policy to protect children.



Kaye Mehta

He analyses the policy debates in US, UK and Canada, and identifies the sectional interests and their advocacy tactics. He frames the inability of states to override industry resistance to controls on marketing as being indicative of dominant neoliberal ideology, whereby markets are essentially protected and consumers have to fend for themselves. Consequently the success of the UK regulator (OfCom) to restrict advertising is recognized as radical and pioneering, and communicates a high value on children's health.

Kline's overall thesis in this book is that children's special status as 'vulnerable consumers in the risk society has made them canaries in the coal mine of twenty-first century lifestyle politics'.

Overall this is well-written book and easy to read. The arguments are logical and well-constructed, and Kline justifies his claims with references to the literature. I highly recommend this book.

*Stephen Kline is Professor of Communications, Simon Fraser University, BC, Canada*

### **Nothing beats the real thing: How copyright, creativity and citizenship shape our society**

- Is it OK to copy this movie for a friend?
- 'Can I take this film clip and put it on my website?'
- 'Downloading the latest film release to watch at home's OK, right?'

These are questions that students face almost daily in today's digital age. However, the answers they receive are not always accurate. *Nothing beats the real thing* is a multimodal online resource for investigating aspects of copyright and film and TV piracy in Australian secondary classrooms

For more details of resources and events, go to:

<http://www.nothingbeatstherealthing.info/#overview>

## Outdoor ads must clean up act or face whip

The industry has been given two years to put its house in order

SIMON CANNING  
REGULATION

A PARLIAMENTARY review of the outdoor advertising industry has left open the door for government regulation unless the industry cleans up its act in two years.

The report by the standing committee on social policy and legal affairs, Reclaiming Public

cont . . .  
reining in the power of advertisers over the Advertising Standards Board, which hears complaints about outdoor advertising.

"They are reviewing it by 2013, but we certainly would like to see it sooner," Ms Hughes said.

She said the review had addressed broader issues than just outdoor advertising in its findings, but questions remained about the administration of the system.

"I question whether the ASB is still independent enough to do the job," she said.

The AANA said its own review process had already begun to

Space, has given the industry two years to get its house in order and address public concerns ranging from marketing junk food to children to depictions of sexuality in outdoor ads.

It highlighted how the advertising industry is incapable of dealing with "rogue elements" refusing to abide by self-regulatory rules.

The committee called on the Attorney-General's Department to review how the industry had dealt with the report in June 2013.

It warned that if the assessment was found lacking "the committee recommends that the Attorney-

address the issues brought up by the committee in its own review of its code of ethics.

Brendon Cook, chief executive of major outdoor company Ooh Media, said self-regulation remained a vital element of the industry's operation, and advertisers themselves were a key to the success of self-regulation.

"I think that that part of it is missed; no one wants to destroy their brand," Mr Cook said.

"Anyway, I think the industry is well ahead of this report.

"Ultimately, the number of complaints is minor."

General's Department impose a self-funded co-regulatory system on advertising with government input into advertising codes of practice".

The committee called for five-yearly reviews of the regulatory system, which changes made to the current system by the industry had been largely reactive to either public criticism or "other threats to the status quo".

In its summation of the state of the outdoor advertising industry, the committee said the Australian Association of National Advertisers, which administers the sys-

He noted that advertising campaigns highlighted by media as examples of the outdoor advertising transgressions, such as Advanced Medical Institute's "Longer Lasting Sex" billboards had not been erected for four years or more.

The committee has also voiced concerns about the lack of enforcement power that the ASB has over advertisers which breach the self-regulatory code.

"The committee notes two of the 15 outdoor advertisements that had complaints upheld against them did not comply with

tem of self-regulation, should work to keep ahead of the industry it regulated. "Rather than a reactive regulatory body, the AANA and the ASB must establish themselves as leaders in the industry," the report said.

But critics claim the inquiry has let advertisers and outdoor site operators off the hook. However, Claire Hughes of the Cancer Council of NSW, which made a submission on behalf of the Coalition on Food Advertising to Children, said the committee did not go far enough in terms of setting a timetable for reform or

the board's determinations. The disregard shown to the ASB by 'rogue elements' highlights the failure of industry peer pressure to ensure compliance in all instances," the report said.

The committee has also called on the ASB to include the sexual objectification of men, women and children in the code of ethics.

It has also given the ASB until the end of October to alter the way it receives complaints, allowing phone and anonymous complaints to be acted on, rather than being restricted to written complaints.

*The Australian, 11 July 2011*

### TEN QUESTIONS

Ben Richardson is the new vice-president and general manager of Nickelodeon Australia. His favourite toy is a battery-operated rabbit that cleans its own shoes.

*The Australian, 18 July 2011*

#### What was your first job in media?

The mailroom at Film Australia during the summer of 1985.

#### What is your current job?

General manager of Nickelodeon Australia and New Zealand.

#### And what have you done in between?

I have worked slowly but diligently towards my dream job, which I currently occupy. Along the way I have worked as a freelance journalist, production assistant, musician, actor, TV writer, producer and supervising producer. I have introduced Indian kids to slime, Pakistani kids to Nickelodeon, Indonesian kids to SpongeBob, Korean kids to play and Japanese kids to iCarly. I've lived in some of the world's biggest, most crowded, most chaotic cities: Mumbai, Jakarta, Seoul and Tokyo and loved the experience. My recent responsibilities also extended to China, the Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Hong Kong, etc. I now look at Australia through Asian eyes.

**You've overseen kids' TV in a range of countries, so tell us: are kids pretty much the same, in terms of what they like to watch?**

#### Did you ever come across a particular show, or character, that baffled you?

Kids are pretty much the same.

They progress through developmental milestones — crawling, walking, talking, reading and writing — universally and this has a big impact on the shows they watch and the behaviour they exhibit. What content baffled me? MTV Japan created an original animation called *Usavich*. It's about two rabbits locked in a Soviet prison (they eventually escape). The rabbits don't speak. Japanese "office ladies" spend a fortune on various collectibles from the series. My favourite is a \$250 large battery operated figurine of one of the characters, who slowly polishes his shoes, over and over again.

#### What is *Taman Ramadan*?

This was a daily live show that I produced for the duration of the holy month of Ramadan in conjunction with Global TV in Indonesia — a kids' show that went live in the 30 minutes before final prayers and featured stories from the Koran, traditional Indonesian puppetry, craft, music, dance and a lot of SpongeBob. The experience helped clear up the

many misconceptions I had about Islam. And it was followed by the best fast-breaking meal I've ever had.

#### How many Australian homes get Nickelodeon?

Nickelodeon is broadcast to over 2.3 million homes across Australia.

#### Do kids watch too much TV these days? Shouldn't they be outside, running around?

Not Nickelodeon kids. They have a perfect study-play-TV viewing balance! Honestly, we are serious about our responsibilities to kids and spend a lot of time not just entertaining, but also encouraging kids to eat well and play. If you've ever watched *Dora the Explorer*, you'll know that it's not a show that kids sit down and passively watch.

#### Prior to taking this role, you were in charge of MTV but tell the truth — most modern music sounds like somebody moving furniture around, does it not?

I'm a father who has worked hard to extend my adolescence, so I try and stay current. Over the last 12 months, I have worked on MTV shows that featured both Katy Perry and Lady Ga Ga. I went into both as a doubter and was

surprised to see how both of these artists were incredibly talented singers, dancers, musicians and performers. And, if you'd spent as much time in karaoke rooms as I have in recent years, you would have a newfound appreciation for modern pop.

#### While working with MTV, did you have to field complaints about graphic video clips?

I had a complaint from the Korean Broadcast Commission six weeks ago that we were featuring too many girl groups dancing in a suggestive way. I thought that was a little unfair because the boy bands did exactly the same thing, though with slightly more clothing. I am careful about what my kids watch, and monitor accordingly, though I don't think things are more graphic than when I was a kid. I'm sure you remember the *Girls On Film* video by Duran Duran. No one ever topped that.

And I've just finished reading a big research paper on the behaviour of the "millennial generation" and they appear to be far more conservative than me. I'm certainly noticing a lot of earnest young men with a lot of facial hair in Australia.

#### And finally, why does SpongeBob live in a pineapple under the sea? I mean, a pineapple?

SpongeBob is a genius — I dare not question his life choices.

CAROLINE OVERINGTON



SUSAN MAUSHART

### Rapid i-movement

THE LAST TIME I looked in on them, their iPhones were nestled all snug in their beds. The kids were in their docking station, too – the queen-sized one – dozing top-to-tail amid a tangle of devices and disused cereal bowls. I gazed at the tableau through eyes bright with tears. Why, it seemed like just yesterday they were cutting their milk teeth on my ergonomic keyboard! (And I've still got the forensic-quality dental impressions to prove it.) Back then, I wondered if they were ever going to sleep through the night. Now, that seems so silly. Of course they aren't.

"Move over! Ur on my side of the bed!" I read on my 16-year-old's Facebook page the next morning. (Timestamp: 3:12am). When I question her, I get the usual response. (She threatens to de-friend me.)

"Hang on," I say. "Maddi was in the same bed with you? And you FACEBOOKED her?"

She nods. "Do you get it now, Mum? This is why I need a king-size bed."

Once upon a time, I used to lie awake nights

### With smartphones, kids can take their entire peer group under the covers

angsting about my kids' media habits. Now I think of it this way: at least sleep deprivation is something we can do as a family.

In a study published last month that looked at the sleeping habits of 690,747 children – by an odd coincidence, pretty much the same number who've slept over at our house since 1995 – University of South Australia researcher Lisa Mastrierciani found "consistent rapid declines in the sleep duration of children and adolescents" over the past century. "We've got things that make children want to go to sleep later, like computers and television," she notes.

That's true as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. With the smartphone revolution upon us, our kids can literally take those computers and that television to bed with them, suckling from them freely through the night. And perhaps most significant of all, thanks to Facebook, Twitter and Skype, they can take their entire peer group under the covers as well, like some vast, hydra-headed teddy bear.

The latest data on phone use shows that the average 13- to 17-year-old sends and receives 3705 text messages a month. "Do you think you use that many texts?" I ask my daughter warily. There's something about her answer – "IDK, Mum" – that fails to reassure. That's 124 texts a day, I persist – or one message every 7.5 minutes during waking hours. "That is hell misleading," she is quick to point out. "I mean, hello? What's a 'waking hour'?"

Well... exactly.

*Weekend Australian Magazine, 9-10 July 2011*

## Lucas backs R18+ games rating

A PUSH for an adults-only classification for video games is winning support as part of a shake-up of censorship laws pushed by the Gillard government.

Queensland Attorney-General Paul Lucas yesterday endorsed the proposed introduction of an R18+ rating category for computer games, to be decided at a meeting of his state and federal counterparts in Adelaide tomorrow.

Mr Lucas said Queensland supported the Gillard government's proposal under a national scheme, which this week won the conditional backing of South Australia.

The Rann government said it would support the new R18+

classification, but only as a replacement for the existing MA15+ rating.

Mr Lucas told *The Australian* his government supported the stricter rating on top of the existing scheme. There are currently four classification categories for computer games: G — General Exhibition, PG — Parental Guidance, M — Mature, and MA15+ — Mature Accompanied.

"Protecting our children and young people from sexually explicit, violent material is a priority for the Queensland government and we are supportive of the introduction of this new R+18 category."

MICHAEL McKENNA

*The Australian, 20 July 2011*

## Rann to ditch MA15+ rating for video games

MARK SCHLIEBS

THE Rann government is willing to become the only jurisdiction to remove the MA15+ rating for video games in favour of R18+ classifications.

The move is being heavily criticised by the state opposition, which says it would be impossible to enforce ratings because of differences between jurisdictions.

The decision to update classifications for video games across the country will be made at the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General in Adelaide on Friday.

A spokesman for Attorney-General John Rau yesterday said the South Australian government would scrap the MA15+ rating regardless of what happened at the meeting.

He said the move would mean games rated MA15+ in other

states would receive R18 ratings in South Australia.

State opposition justice spokesman Stephen Wade said he was shocked by the government's stance.

"I think it would be bizarre if they were to go it alone," he said. "The Attorney-General has indicated that he appreciates that people will continue to access games, through downloading them and through mail order.

"So it would be clearly an unfair impost on South Australian retailers at a time we are very aware of the competition between the online retail market and the shopfront retail market."

Interactive Games and Entertainment Association chief executive Ron Curry said abolishing the MA15+ rating made no sense. He said it would be nearly impossible to advertise the same game nationally if it had different classifications in each state.

*The Australian, 18 July 2011*

## Celebrating childish things and silly stuff

### PICK OF THE DAY

Play School, 9.30am,  
ABC 4 Kids on ABC2

GRAEME BLUNDELL



MANY of us with children — and let's face it, those without, such is the show's enduring fame — will find it hard to believe *Play School* turns 45 today. And except for new opening titles, featuring the much-loved *Play School* toys, and a new arrangement of the classic theme song, sung by Jay Laga'aia and Justine Clarke, it is little different from when it first started.

The show has had 86 presenters through the years and the roster now includes Clarke, Andrew McFarlane, Essie Davis and Georgie Parker. They shine with a kind of evangelical light and goodness and are highly proficient at their musical presentations, which are far more technically daunting than they look. I know. I failed the audition.

The first episode went to air at 10.05am on July 18, 1966, in NSW and Victoria. The show was soon broadcast across the country.

*Play School* showed two warm, caring people taking time to be with one child, and they addressed that child directly and personally through the camera.

Into this relationship were woven the stories, songs and activities that would form the fabric of Australian children's culture.

In the early days the actors were all from Sydney and spoke nicely, especially Alister Smart and Dianne Dorgan, who possessed those plummy English voices so adored by Australian high culture at the time.

For several years the actors conformed to stereotypes that were about to be trashed by the emerging social movements of the 1970s. The women did the washing up and the ironing and made the picnics, and the men were action chaps full of jolly good ideas. That subtly changed as social revolution seeped into the show and it became obvious that children simply liked watching the show and singing the songs. They still do.

The current presenters are terrific, celebrating childish things with silly noises and games, and doing it with straight faces and good hearts.

*The Australian, 18 July 2011*

# A-Gs to probe kids' privacy on Facebook

VERIFY EDWARDS

THE nation's attorneys-general will discuss whether laws should be introduced to allow parents access to their children's Facebook accounts and social networking sites, allowing them to legally breach their privacy.

The Standing Committee of Attorneys-General will focus on social networking and new-media legal issues when it meets in Adelaide today, including discussions on what can be done to crack down on breaches of suppression orders on sites such as Facebook and MySpace.

South Australian Attorney-General John Rau yesterday said there needed to be a discussion on the impact of new technologies on suppression orders.

"Sooner or later there has to be a discussion about what is going to be occurring in the virtual world, because technology has been moving very quickly," Mr Rau told *The Australian*.

"We need to look at the policing that occurs, who can and should do it and how do you do it."

Mr Rau said the attorneys-general needed to look at whether parents should have rights to access their children's accounts, despite concerns it would breach privacy.

"For some reason, when you mention Facebook, people think the rules should be different."

Australian Privacy Foundation chairman Roger Clarke said there had always been a grey area regarding children and teenagers, and each case needed to be looked at separately.

"It is difficult and most inappropriate to come up with a rule that at the age of 13 or 18 they become grown-ups and independent of their parents and have the right to privacy," Dr Clarke said.

Dr Clarke said a knee-jerk reaction to restrict access to public space would be a "horrible thing".

"If they do something silly they're going to undermine an existing law and relationships between children and parents."

The attorneys-general will also discuss what can be done to ensure suppression orders are not breached, as has happened in several high-profile court cases.

Last November, Jason Alexan-

## Outback Aborigines in no rush to log on

**MANY remote indigenous communities may not realise the full benefits of the \$36 billion National Broadband Network, challenging the government's plans to bridge the digital divide, new research finds.**

The initial findings of the study suggest internet take-up in some remote communities in central Australia is as low as one household in 30.

Only about one-third of the 48 people involved in the research had been online — despite the potential for the internet to help people live on remote traditional lands while still having access to information and services.

Director of research at the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network Ryan Sengara said that "infrastructure alone is not enough to improve the situation".

"So while the National Broadband Network will deliver broadband to these communities, in order for indigenous Australians to see some of the benefits of connectivity issues of affordability, skills, training and equipment must be addressed," Mr Sengara said.

The study was conducted by three organisations, including the Central Land Council, and received funding from ACCAN.

Despite the government's digital economy goals including

der Downie was accused online of being the murderer of Chantelle Rowe, 16, and her parents Andrew and Rose, shortly after he allegedly committed the crimes. His name was suppressed until recently and he is facing charges.

Independent senator Nick Xenophon has been campaigning for new laws to target social networking sites for several years. Last year he unsuccessfully proposed new laws targeted at pedophiles to stop adults lying about their age when dealing with underage children on the internet.

Senator Xenophon said there was a desperate need for law reform when it came to the internet.



### NBN WATCH

How your billions are being spent

narrowing the gap between the capital cities and regional areas, the study found that a new approach was needed.

"Communications policy for remote indigenous Australians has predominantly been directed at larger communities and is currently based upon a shared facilities approach, such as internet cafes or access centres," the report finds.

"This approach is not viable for all communities, particularly those with small populations, due to maintenance and supervision costs."

While the NBN would improve bandwidth at a technical level, the bush would still be offered mass-marketed retail services that "are known to be unattractive and problematic to indigenous households", the study found.

The government recently unveiled a national digital economy strategy, including a \$12.4m "digital enterprise" plan that will make funds available for local cultural organisations.

ANNABEL HEPWORTH  
MITCHELL BINGEMANN

"We've got 20th-century laws that aren't coping with the 21st-century phenomenon of social media," Senator Xenophon said.

"I urge the state attorneys-general to take an innovative approach; they need to, and we need to have a national conversation about this."

But Senator Xenophon agreed the issue needed to be treated delicately because it could cause relationship breakdowns between parents and children.

The standing committee will also discuss the recent High Court decisions relating to organised crime legislation, and R+ ratings for video games.

## World of Bananas

Endemol Worldwide is celebrating the sale of the newly animated series of *Bananas in Pyjamas* to every major European market, Ireland, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and New Zealand. Chief executive of Distribution Cathy Paynesays she looks forward to seeing the Bananas "coming down the stairs" in French, German, Swedish, Norwegian, Polish and Russian. But will audiences know that they're Australian? "Of course!" says Payne. "They have a friend who is a kangaroo!" Also a friend called Rat, who has survived the culture test. "There can be some sensitivity in some countries about some animals," Payne says. "Pigs, dogs . . . they can be problematic. But Rat is staying."

*The Australian, 4 July 2011*

## Bad week for . . .

CHILDREN exposed to violence on TV and in video games: they are more likely to have problems sleeping, suggests a study online in the journal *Pediatrics* involving three to five-year-olds. The average time they spent each day watching TV, using a computer or playing video games was 73 minutes. And 18 per cent had at least one sleep problem. Violent content and evening media use were linked to an increased likelihood of having a sleep problem.

*Pediatrics*  
2011;doi:10.1542/  
peds.2010-3304  
(Garrison M et al)

*Weekend Australian, 16-17 July 2011*

*The Australian, 21 July 2011*

# Old-time tech head says 3D films here to stay

It remains a cinematic genre largely 'for younger people'

MICHELLE KUNG  
LOS ANGELES

OVER the course of several decades, prolific inventor of 3D technology and founder of Stereo-Graphics Lenny Lipton, 71, has had a front-row seat at the evolution of 3D films.

He has racked up more than 50 patents in or related to the field, and believes that unlike the short-lived boom of the 1950s, today's 3D movement, is here to stay.

But while excitement for stereoscopic content is building overall, the format is at a crossroads as far as some movie audiences are concerned.

"The 3D boom of the 1950s was a true boom because for a couple of years, you had 50 or 60 3D pictures of good and bad quality being released," Lipton says.

"In the early 1980s, you had maybe a handful of 3D films released, but they were stinkers. Now we're back to the usual mix of good and bad 3D films, but audiences are raising questions about the format."

Modern 3D films typically carry a ticket surcharge and are increasingly being rejected by movie-goers in favour of 2D films.

Ticket sales for 3D showings of movies such as *Green Lantern* and *Cars 2* are only 40 per cent to 45 per cent of US box office, com-

pared with higher percentages in past years.

Film industry and movie theatre executives are closely monitoring the performance of 3D releases such as *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part II*, Martin Scorsese's *Hugo* and Steven Spielberg's *The Adventures of Tintin* to gauge 3D's popularity.

"My expertise is more on the technology than the business side, but it seems that if you're going to charge people more money to see a 3D movie, you better deliver or people will become especially disappointed, because they've spent a premium," Lipton says.

"At the creative end, you've got a lot of people who are learning how to use the medium. In the next three years, it won't cost much more to make a 3D movie than a 2D movie, people will learn and the technology will advance."

Lipton first became intrigued by the concept of stereoscopic, or three-dimensional, imagery when growing up in post-World War II New York.

As a boy, he often accompanied his mother to the Brooklyn Paramount and other neighbourhood cinemas to bask in the majesty of the elaborate lobbies and Golden Era films that were shown.

"The movie palaces were the closest thing we had to royalty or nobility," Lipton recalls.

"It was wonderful, and then suddenly it was 3D."

It wasn't long before he began drawing 3D comic books with red and green crayons on tracing paper, constructing lenses from

cardboard tubes and magnifying glasses, and building projectors to have neighbourhood shows.

Lipton's interest continued while at Cornell University, where he majored in physics and wrote what he calls his equivalent of a MacArthur "genius" grant: the words to what would become the popular Peter, Paul and Mary song *Puff the Magic Dragon*.

So, blessed with financial security, he became a filmmaker, author and stereoscopic inventor.

He says one thing turning off today's 3D movie audiences is projection quality.

Films can often appear darker than their 2D counterparts because of the 3D eyewear being worn, the use of the wrong equipment for a specific theatre, or the age of the projector's light source.

He says lamps and digital projectors are very costly, so after the lamps start to get dim, theatre owners have "a temptation to use them past their rated life".

The brightness issue did not exist in the 50s because "the theatres were using two projectors" to display the 3D images, one for each eye, "and that immediately doubled the brightness".

And "the screens were smaller". Lipton says the problem then "was getting the two projectors to run like one; it was just beyond a projectionist's ability".

He says another thing talked about today is movies that are converted from 2D to 3D.

"Well, sometimes the 3D conversion houses do a good job and everything looks just fine, and

sometimes they don't," he says. When it comes to conversions, the most important thing "is the expertise of the conversion house and the eyeballs of the stereographer" managing the 3D look.

Another factor is the final cut. "You've got a lot of processes... to make the images look right, so if you recut the movie in the week or so before release, you may be throwing out shots that took a lot of effort," he says.

**We're back to the usual mix of good and bad 3D films, but audiences are raising questions**

But he says there are also movies that are shot in 3D that haven't come out well.

He says from a 3D perspective, Disney's latest *Pirates of the Caribbean* "looked mediocre" and its *Tron Legacy* "was just a terrible job of stereoscopic filmmaking", even though it made a lot of money.

"But the same studio also produced a beautiful, veritable stereoscopic masterpiece *Tangled*, so you never know," he says.

In terms of content, Lipton says 3D remains a cinematic genre largely "for younger people, much like horror and science fiction is".

"The first modern 3D movie was *Chicken Little*, and that's really a terrible looking film in terms of its stereoscopic aspect," he says.

"But very rapidly, Disney, and

then Pixar and Sony Pictures Imageworks began to turn out really excellent, terrific 3D movies. So we've seen a progression of the stereoscopic cinema evolve from just being movies for little kids to being for an older demographic. That may be part of the attendance issues, because older people may be a more discerning crowd that expects more than kids do."

As Hollywood wrestles with the 3D theatrical experience, Lipton is paying attention to the development of new 3D cameras.

Current 3D movies are shot by two cameras and "getting those two devices to work like one is a big pain".

He'd like to see the development of a proper stereoscopic camera that had the look and feel of a typical production camera. "They wouldn't have another three or four extra people on the set, which is what makes a lot of production more costly and slows down the process," he says.

He says most televisions will soon have 3D capabilities built in.

He is working with marine photographer Bob Talbot on a deep-sea show demo for a 3D TV network.

"My group is trying to get a bunch of TV shows started because the 3D television networks haven't content," he says.

He also has high hopes for 3D tablets, which he says may be the "hottest thing for stereoscopic imaging that ever happened".

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

The Australian, 19 July 2011

## ROWLING RECYCLES THE GREATEST MYTH

There's more than magic to Harry Potter

MICHAEL GERSON

ARGUABLY the most famous living Englishman is, technically, not alive. But Harry Potter now determines the US conception of Britishness as thoroughly as Sherlock Holmes ever did.

Rather than making the pilgrimage to Baker Street, a generation will visit King's Cross station asking for Platform 9¾ and expect to exchange dollars for Galleons at Gringotts.

The mythic geography of England — always as important as its actual hills and streets — has been reshaped by JK Rowling.

Young Potter is invariably taken either too seriously or not seriously enough. Modern witch-hunters believe his spells and potions are an invitation to the occult — forgetting the equally potent magic of Narnia or Middle Earth. Literary critics dismiss Rowling's writing as banal, her stories as derivative — a rummage sale of mythological crea-

tures and conventional themes.

Neither snobs nor fundamentalists have prevented the sale of 450 million Harry Potter books.

The books, in fact, are gloriously derivative, providing an introduction not to magic but to mythology. Harry's world is populated by centaurs, dragons, werewolves, grindylows, Cornish pixies, sphinxes, phoenixes, goblins and hippogriffs. It is as though Egyptian, Greek and Roman mythology, European folklore and Arthurian legend discovered the same playground. "I'm one of the very few," Rowling says, "who has ever found a practical application for their classics degree."

The world's great stories — of heroic journeys, of peril, testing and courage, of nature enchanted, of happy endings — get reincarnated for a reason. Created to explain the world, myths eventually began to explain us, and our pre-rational values and

culture. When these strings are touched, we feel the vibrations deep down. And we know that myths are not the same as lies.

In his essay *On Fairy-Stories*, JRR Tolkien describes the highest achievement of the teller of stories as "sub-creation". The sub-creator fashions "a secondary world which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is 'true': it accords with the laws of that world".

Tolkien calls this "a special skill, a kind of elvish craft". The creator of Harry Potter practises this craft well. To read Rowling is to pack a bag and make a visit. Tolkien describes the climax of a fairy story as the "turn" — the moment when fantastic and terrible adventures are transformed by sudden grace, "giving a fleeting glimpse of joy, joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief".

"A tale that in any measure succeeds in this point," he continues, "has not wholly failed, whatever flaws it may possess."

In the last of the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, and in the movie based upon it,

Rowling reaches the turn. A boy who has played Quidditch, discovered girls, broken curfew and cheated death again and again discovers he was intended for death, "marked for slaughter", all along. A scarred hero — his birth prophesied, his character tested by the temptation of dark power — realises he must sacrifice himself for the sake of his friends. The "chosen one", it turns out, was not chosen for honour but for extermination. Death can be defeated only when it is embraced. Harry's destiny requires a "cold-blooded walk to his own destruction".

These are the ambitions of Rowling's brand of children's literature. Harry's walk towards the Forbidden Forest gains the reflected emotional power of the walk from Gethsemane to Golgotha. It is the recycling of the greatest myth, a myth that some regard as true. And the final delivery from death is the culmination of all happy endings.

Rowling's children's tale has a glimpse of the power beyond the reach of magic.

WASHINGTON POST WRITERS GROUP

The Australian, 20 July 2011

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

## ADVERTISING

Hill, Jennifer A (2011)  
**Endangered childhoods: how consumerism is impacting child and youth identity.**  
*Media Culture & Society, Vol. 33, No. 3, Pp347-362*

Auger, N; et al (2011)  
**Children and youth perceive smoking messages in an unbranded advertisement from a NIKE marketing campaign: a cluster randomised controlled trial.**  
*BMC Pediatrics, Vol. 11, Arch. 26*

Nefat, A & Benazic, D (2011)  
**Parents' perceptions of food advertising aimed at children on television: Exposure, influence and regulations.**  
*Ekonomika istrazivanja, (Economic Research), Vol. 24, No. 1, Pp49-67*

## COMPUTERS &amp; INTERNET

(May 2011)  
**New online program trains teachers in cybersafety.**  
*acma news, No. 63, Pp3*

Oakshot, G (2011)  
**Trapped on the Web.**  
*About the House, No. 41, Pp36-39*

Jachimiak, PH (2011)  
**Children and the Internet.**  
*European Journal of Cultural Studies, Vol. 14, No. 2, Pp243-245*

Huang, XQ et al (2011)  
**Treatment of Internet addiction.**  
*Current Psychiatry Reports, Vol. 12, No. 5, Pp462-470*

Dempsey, AG et al (2011)  
**Has cyber technology produced a new group of peer aggressors?**  
*Cyberpsychology Behavior and Social Networking, Vol. 14, No. 5, Pp297-302*

## MEDIA EFFECTS - SOCIAL

Jolin, EM & Weller, RA (2011)  
**Television viewing and its impact on childhood behaviors.**  
*Current Psychiatry Reports, Vol. 13, No. 2, Pp122-128*

Halliwell, E; et al (2011)  
**Body dissatisfaction: Can a short media literacy message reduce negative media exposure effects amongst adolescent girls?**  
*British Journal of Health Psychology, Vol. 16, Part 2, Pp396-403*

Veitch, J; et al (2011)  
**Is the neighbourhood environment associated with sedentary behaviour**

**outside of school hours among children?**  
*Annals of Behavioral Medicine, Vol. 41, No. 3, Pp333-341*

Kimbro, RT; et al (2011)  
**Young children in urban areas: Links among neighborhood characteristics, weight status, outdoor play, and television watching.**  
*Social Science & Medicine, Vol. 72, No. 5, Pp668-676*

Pascoe, CJ (2011)  
**Resource and risk: Youth sexuality and new media use.**  
*Sexuality Research and Social Policy, Vol. 8, No. 1, Pp5-17*

Subbotsky, E & Slater, E (2011)  
**Children's discrimination of fantastic vs realistic visual displays after watching a film with magical content.**  
*Perceptual and Motor Skills, Vol. 112, No. 2, Pp603-609*

## MEDIA EFFECTS - HEALTH

Gopinath, B et al (2011)  
**Influence of physical activity and screen time on the retinal microvasculature in young children.**  
*Arterioscler Thromb Vasc Biol, Vol. 31, No. 5, Pp1233-1239*

Hammond, DE et al (2011)  
**Growing minds: The relationship between parental attitudes toward their child's outdoor recreation and their child's health.**  
*HortTechnology, Vol. 21, No. 2, Pp217-224*

Jones, R; Wells, M et al (2011)  
**Is an online healthy lifestyles program acceptable for parents of preschool children.**  
*Nutrition & Dietetics, Vol. 68, No. 2, Pp149-154*

## VIDEO GAMES

Wasterfors, David (2011)  
**Stretching capabilities: children with disabilities playing TV and computer games.**  
*Disability & Society, Vol. 26, No. 3, Pp337-349*

Chory, RM & Goodboy, AK (2011)  
**Is basic personality related to violent and non-violent video game play and preferences?**  
*Cyberpsychology Behavior and Social Networking, Vol. 14, No. 4, Pp191-198*

Choliz, M & Marco, C (2011)  
**Pattern of use and dependence on video games in infancy and adolescence.**  
*Anales de Psicologia, Vol. 27, No. 2, Pp418-426*

Blumberg, FC (2011)  
**Ramifications of video game play for academic learning and cognitive skill acquisition: Introduction.**  
*Child Development Perspectives, Vol. 5, No. 2, Pp73-74*

Gentile, D (2011)  
**The multiple dimensions of video game effects.**  
*Child Development Perspectives, Vol. 5, No. 2, Pp75-81*

Blumberg, FC & Altschuler, E (2011)  
**From the playroom to the classroom: Children's views of video game play and academic learning.**  
*Child Development Perspectives, Vol. 5, No. 2, Pp99-103*

Chaput, JP; et al (2011)  
**Video game playing increases food intake in adolescents: a randomized crossover study.**  
*American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Vol. 93, No. 6, Pp1196-1203*

## VIOLENCE

Gentile, DA et al (2011)  
**Media violence associations with the form and function of aggression among elementary school children.**  
*Social Development, Vol. 20, No. 2, Pp213-232*

Bailey, K; West, R; Anderson, CA (2011)  
**The association between chronic exposure to video game violence and effective picture processing: An ERP study.**  
*Cognitive, Affective, & Behavioral Neuroscience, Vol. 11, No. 2, Pp259-276*

Krahe, B & Moller, I (2011)  
**Links between self-reported media violence exposure and teacher ratings of aggression and prosocial behavior among German adolescents.**  
*Journal of Adolescence, Vol. 34, No. 2, Pp279-287*

## CONFERENCES

**More than Square Eyes?  
 Children and the Media**

**How can young people use social media without being at risk?**

**Monday, 5th September  
 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm  
 Bradley Forum - Hawke Building Level 5  
 UniSA City West Campus  
 50-55 North Terrace, Adelaide**

This event is FREE but for catering purposes please REGISTER by emailing lynette.kelly@unisa.edu.au by the 31st of August.

