



British Board of Film Classification  
Annual Report and Accounts 2011





# British Board of Film Classification Annual Report and Accounts

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*The Adventures of Tin Tin 'PG'*

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**Meeting consumer demand**

One of the key pieces of legislation which governs the work of the BBFC – the Video Recordings Act – is now over a quarter of a century old. It predates the technological revolution which has led to the multiple delivery channel world in which we live.

So 2011 seemed like a good time to ask the British public what value they placed on the BBFC in the digital world. Is there a role for the BBFC and, if so, what should it be?

Independent research carried out in June 2011 demonstrated conclusively that the public values what we do to bring content advice online. That research showed that while the public considers that the internet brings greater choice, freedom and flexibility, the majority of viewers still consider it important to be able to check the suitability of audio-visual content they download. As more viewing takes place online, consumers expect that the same level of BBFC support will apply online as currently applies offline. 85% consider it important to have consistent BBFC classifications available for VOD content, rising to 90% of parents of children under 16. 89% of parents check BBFC classifications on films



that they and their children download, even though this is not always easy to do. 82% of parents with children under 16 prefer to download films which carry a BBFC online classification over those films which do not. 92% of those who regularly download films find BBFC ratings and content advice useful.

This view is echoed by the home entertainment industry. David Cooke touches on this in his introduction, but I'd like to share one comment made by a distributor which gets its online content classified by the BBFC on a best practice, voluntary basis: "*what matters is that the BBFC is there to inform people about content ... that is*

*more and more important to the online world*".

**Government initiatives**

2011 has been a busy year in terms of Government initiatives. Since January, the BBFC has contributed to several Government consultations or Parliamentary Inquiries. These include the Communications Act consultation where we, alongside others concerned with the home entertainment, film and other online industries, urged Government to support existing best practice self regulation in the online space. We gave evidence to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Protection online on the successful partnership between

the BBFC and the home entertainment industry which is increasingly leading to trusted BBFC symbols and content advice being attached to material being distributed online.

We contributed to the Licensing Act consultation launched by John Penrose MP, Minister for Tourism and Heritage at the Department for Culture Media and Sport, in the autumn. We worked closely with cinema exhibitors and film distributors on a sensible way forward and we, the FDA and CEA jointly recommended to Government maintaining the current licensing regime with some minor amendments. We all believe that the current Licensing Act offers the best statutory mechanism to: maintain child protection; ensure a continued role for local authorities as the enforcement body and appeal mechanism for BBFC classifications; enable exhibitors and distributors to get films to market efficiently and in a properly regulated safe environment for the public.

We also responded to the Government's consultation on Suicide Prevention in England and Wales. Working closely with bodies such as The Samaritans, the BBFC ensures that depictions of suicide and self harm

are appropriately classified to keep potentially harmful content away from impressionable children and young people.

In partnership with other regulators and the music industry, the BBFC has been working towards implementation of Reg Bailey's Review into the Commercialisation and Sexualisation of Children. First, working with Ofcom and others, we jointly set up a website – ParentPort – which parents can use if they are concerned about content in a range of media, from posters to videos; from films to television, including online. Second, we are also discussing with the music industry possible ways forward in relation to the classification and age rating of music videos.

The music video issue has been given more impetus by the promised DCMS consultation on exempt video works, due to be launched in 2012. We, the British Video Association, British Phonographic Industry, the Video Standards Council and the Local Government Association support a technical adjustment to the Video Recordings Act whereby content in exempt videos which is potentially harmful to children should lose the video its exemption and require it to

receive an enforceable BBFC classification to keep it away from vulnerable and impressionable children.

**Sexual violence**

Along with strong language, sexual violence was one of the key classification themes of 2011. The issue of sexual or sexualised or sadistic violence, usually but not always directed against women, continued to be a feature requiring careful attention in works submitted to the BBFC. The BBFC has a robust policy on depictions of sexual violence in films and videos. It will refuse to certify any content which endorses or eroticises sexual or sexualised violence.

In 2011, two works in particular attracted controversy because they featured extreme violence against women. The BBFC considered *The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* (in which a man achieves sexual gratification from the stapling together of victims to form a human centipede and which culminates in him raping a woman with barbed wire) and *The Bunny Game* (in which a truck driver abducts, strips and sexually abuses and tortures a prostitute).

## President's Introduction



The BBFC intervened with both of these works. It made significant cuts to *The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* and refused to certify *The Bunny Game* because of the harm risk both works pose. It is illegal to supply the uncut version of *The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* and any version of *The Bunny Game* in the UK.

Partly as a result of these and other films, the BBFC is commissioning a major new piece of original research into depictions of sadistic, sexual and sexualised violence, mainly against women, to determine what the British public today believes is potentially harmful and therefore unacceptable for classification. The research will be completed in 2012 and the BBFC will publish it given that it might be helpful to other regulators.

### Hail and farewell

In 2011, the BBFC welcomed an entirely new Video Appeals Committee chaired by Professor Andrew Burrows. I should like to offer my thanks to the outgoing Chair, John Wood, and his colleagues for their work over many years. They offered a model of complete integrity and independence.

The BBFC also welcomed a number of new members onto its Consultative

Council. These include representatives of parents groups, such as Reg Bailey of the Mothers Union, and Justine Roberts of Mumsnet. They include representatives of law enforcement agencies; local government; fellow media regulators, including Ofcom and the ASA; and industry, including the FDA and CEA.

We said goodbye to a number of Consultative Council members: Colin Webb, Colin Munro, David Buckingham, Maurice Mills, Tony Beech, Andy Shortland, Gery McLaughlin, Goronwy Parry and Mike Rawlinson. I am most grateful for their contributions over the past few years and wish them well in the future.

As always, it has been good to work closely with Graham Lee, who chairs the Council of Management, Steve Jaggs its Vice Chairman and our other colleagues on that body.

Finally, I should like to record my thanks to the Director, David Cooke, for his enthusiastic and effective support to the Presidential team, and indeed to Council, and for his direction and leadership of the Board's work as a whole. Without him, and his able team of colleagues, none of this would be possible.

### Look forward to 2012

2012 is a big year for the BBFC. It's our centenary. We are planning a number of events to mark the occasion. These include exhibitions, and an international conference. Regular cinema goers will have been seeing from 1 January a series of black card designs based on the classic BBFC black cards through the century starting with our pre-First World War certificate. Film fans will be interested in a BFI book, part history, part forward look, about the BBFC to be published in the autumn to coincide with a BFI-organised season of controversial films.

So 25 years on from the Video Recordings Act, we have a great deal to look forward to. Continued high levels of trust from the public. Ever deepening levels of cooperation with the film and home entertainment industries, both offline and increasingly in online partnerships. And a year long celebration of film and the BBFC's role and that of its dedicated and expert staff past and present, in this major creative industry.

Quentin Thomas, 2012

## Director's Report

### Higher film submissions; lower video submissions

2011 was another successful year for film, during which we classified 710 films for theatrical release. An increase of 56 features, or 8.5% over 2010. It was less of a busy year for video. We classified 9,374 video features totalling 645,619 minutes. On the face of it, this looks like a significant decrease over the 2010 figure of nearly 13,000 works. But the 2010 figure was abnormally high as a result of a backlog of works needing legal classification following the entry into force of the Video Recordings Act 2010 which ended the hiatus in enforcement of the Video Recordings Act 1984. Nevertheless, the 2011 figure represents a continuation of the declining trend we've seen since 2006 in the number of video works reaching the UK market. But it remains significantly higher than pre-2002 levels when DVD started to replace VHS and the numbers of video works released in the UK leapt up.

### Meeting the changing needs of industry

As the BBFC approached its centenary in 2012, I considered that 2011 would be a good time to consider where we are and how we have changed over the years to take account of shifting social attitudes –



reflected in our Classification Guidelines – but also a rapidly changing film and home entertainment industry.

So we asked both the public and the industry what they wanted from the BBFC. Quentin Thomas discusses the results of the public consultation. It's right that I consider the industry's responses given my daily relationship with our customers, both large and small.

In June 2011, we commissioned research into our customers' needs. The research was well-received and the results showed very positive industry perceptions of the BBFC which have been improving over time. To build on this, we drew up Action Plans which we are implementing to improve the service we offer our customers even further.

Industry told us that they need ever faster turnaround times. So during



2011, we improved our efficiency to reduce DVD turnaround time by 13% to 8.6 calendar days. Film turnaround time is now 2.6 calendar days, and we have just introduced a same day film classification service.

During 2011, we strengthened our relationship with the home entertainment industry through quarterly meetings with the BVA; and with the film industry through six monthly meetings with the FDA. This is in addition to our bilateral meetings with film and video distributors to address upcoming issues, both general and industry wide (such as the depiction of smoking in films) or specific to a single distributor.

This year we began working with industry partners on arguably the biggest single change in how works are submitted for classification – namely digital submissions of video works. This joint work which covers everything from ensuring security to improving turnaround times will lead to the launch of digital submissions in September 2012.

Other changes on the back of the industry research and other customer feedback include better communication with customers through a quarterly newsletter; a two

way programme of short term placements between the BBFC and industry; an improved Extranet, launched in June, with improved navigation and speed; a simplified submission process; and a digitised process for video packaging approval.

Although we put ever greater effort into customer care, we cannot and should not give them everything they want. The most obvious area where this is true is the classification we award a film or video. We encourage all our customers to indicate what classification they would like each film or video they submit to be awarded. This is a helpful indicator to us. But the wishes of the public, along with UK law, as expressed in our Classification Guidelines, are paramount. This means that we sometimes award a classification which is higher than the customers wants. In 2011, we awarded a higher classification to that requested, or made cuts to achieve the requested classification, for 23% of theatrical feature films and 13% of video features.

**Empowering consumers online** Meanwhile, our joint initiative with the home entertainment industry which provides for the voluntary classification of content distributed

online, continues to grow. This initiative enables consumers, parents in particular, to download and stream films online with BBFC symbols and content advice attached to those films helping inform their choices. In 2011, we welcomed several new members to the service, including BT Vision, Talk Talk and Netflix. We have given online classification certificates to over 200,000 works. Customers who use this service commented this year on the reasons they do so. They said *"We future proof our titles now so when it does become law, we are in a good place"; "had no-one gone down this path, we could have been found wanting"; "it doesn't involve Government ... putting in place something which is more bureaucratic"; "the BBFC classification... is an indication that it is legitimate ... just like you know that Tesco or HMV is different from the guy at the market stall"*.

It's clear that the home entertainment industry continues to support strongly the BBFC's presence in the online space because it future proofs their titles; reflects positively on their brand imagery; reassures customers; and obviates the need for legislation.

Given the success of this, and other, self-regulatory mechanisms, we

believe the Government's priority should be to create an appropriate framework enabling both existing and future effective self, co and statutory regulation to flourish, empowering consumers to inform and protect themselves and their families.

**Engaging with the public**

We've seen in 2011 an ever greater desire from the public to engage with the BBFC through new media. In response to this demand, we launched a podcast, two episodes of which we released in 2011, about film classification. We've stepped up our twitter feed to cover not just the latest film releases but also our education work with schools and colleges and joint initiatives such as Safer Internet Day. I began blogging on the new Huffington Post UK website, when it launched in July, on topical issues of concern.

In 2011, the BBFC also launched an App for smartphones, enabling consumers to access information about the latest film releases and helping parents make decisions as to which films may be suitable for them and their family, even while standing the the queue at their local multiplex!

In 2011, our education team spoke face to face to over 12,000 mainly

secondary school students. In September, we launched our Ja.NET video conferencing service, enabling us to reach schools in the farthest corners of the United Kingdom. The team also maintained the BBFC's three educational websites aimed at young children, students and parents.

In 2012, we will increase still further our support for consumers, parents in particular, by making our website more consumer friendly; relaunching the rich content advice service which we provide for consumers; and supporting conversations about film classification and media literacy through social media.

**What's in store for 2012**

Partnership with industry will continue to be one of our guiding principles as we develop new, often self-regulatory solutions for the classification of content. So will engagement with, and empowerment of, consumers as we develop ever more comprehensive means of providing the public with content advice. And of course the protection of children will continue to be at the heart of everything we do.

2012 also marks our centenary. This will increase our visibility, at least until 31 December. We look forward to celebrating our 100th birthday

through events involving the film and home entertainment industries; academic institutions; film bodies such as the BFI and BAFTA; charities and groups involved in child protection and film education; past and present BBFC staff; and most of all the public.

David Cooke, 2012

The BBFC is accountable to both the public and Parliament. It takes this accountability seriously. This Annual Report is a key part of its fulfilment of this requirement. It provides a review of the activities and classification decisions of the Board over 2011 as well as information about our financial position as required by law. Our Reports are posted onto our websites and are placed in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

The BBFC views providing the public, especially parents, with detailed and accessible information about the works it classifies as another essential element of its function and accountability. This information is published on the BBFC's websites, and enables parents and other viewers alike to make informed choices about what they and their families watch both at the cinema and in the home.



The Board's main website, [www.bbfc.co.uk](http://www.bbfc.co.uk), provides information about all the works classified by the BBFC, including Consumer Advice and Extended Classification Information (ECI). ECI consists of detailed information about the content of the work and the rationale for the classification decision.

Consumer Advice is provided for all films, video and video game works classified by the BBFC. Consumer Advice briefly describes the content which determined the classification of a work and highlights particular issues such as sex, violence and language. Extended Classification Information (ECI) is available for every film and video game classified since Autumn 2007. ECI gives a more detailed account of the classification issues in the work and any additional elements that might be of interest to the potential audience, particularly parents.

Consumer Advice and ECI for films and video games, and Consumer Advice for DVDs, is also available via the free BBFC App, for iPhone, iPod Touch and Android devices.

To engage still further with the public in 2011, the BBFC began blogging on the new Huffington Post UK website, which launched in July. BBFC Director David Cooke published six blog posts from July to December covering issues including film rejection; classifying sex across the age categories; the BBFC's education programme; and the BBFC's voluntary online film labelling service.

In October, the BBFC launched a regular podcast to discuss recent classification decisions and major classification themes. Listeners can actively engage in the podcast by emailing their questions and comments to [podcast@bbfc.co.uk](mailto:podcast@bbfc.co.uk). BBFC activity on twitter also increased in 2011. The @BBFC twitter account, originally set up to tweet film classification decisions, is now used to tweet all press releases, BBFC education visits, new case studies, and other classification news relevant to the public and film and video industries.



The BBFC generally receives a relatively small number of complaints about its classification decisions and this trend continued in 2011. The BBFC responds to every email and letter providing the rationale for its decision and addressing any specific points raised by the correspondent. Public feedback is important to the BBFC as it provides an immediate response to its decisions and helps shape the research and large scale public consultations carried out at each review of the BBFC Classification Guidelines.

A trio of films classified at 12A and featuring young but strong heroines facing difficult, albeit fantasy, circumstances, dominated the BBFC 'postbag' in 2011.

The teenage character in *Hanna* is a genetically engineered 'super soldier' sent on a quest to avenge the murder of her mother. The film generated twenty-nine complaints. Although the film has a clear action adventure and sci-fi context, some viewers found the violence sadistic and gratuitous. That a teenage girl is at the centre of the

violence, despite her 'super human' abilities, was another troubling aspect for some cinema goers.

*Sucker Punch* sees its young female protagonist, Baby Doll, incarcerated in a mental health hospital by her stepfather who wants to claim her inheritance. To escape her ordeal, she retreats into different fantasy worlds in which she, and other female inmates, are empowered as warriors battling robot soldiers and dragons. The film received fifteen complaints for its perceived sexual suggestiveness and



1 *Twilight Breaking Dawn Part 1* '12A'

2 *Sucker Punch* '12A'



the level of threat aimed at the female characters. The implication that in one of Baby Doll's fantasy worlds she is forced to work in a brothel drew most criticism. However, the treatment of this aspect of the film is restrained and relatively discreet and not shown to be glamorous or aspirational.

*Twilight - Breaking Dawn - Part 1*, the fourth film in the popular Twilight Saga, sees Bella and her vampire

boyfriend, Edward, finally marry and consummate their relationship. The film generated sixteen complaints. Only a few of these concerned the wedding night sex scene, which had been reduced in strength, following an advice viewing, to secure the 12A category. The majority of complaints focussed on the sequence in which an emergency Caesarean section is performed on Bella, which some viewers found gory and distressing.

BBFC Guidelines allow brief sight of blood and gore at 12A. The operation occurs out of shot and the scene concentrates on the faces of the characters and the drama of the situation, rather than the detail of the procedure, while elliptical editing echoes Bella's slipping in and out of consciousness.



This use of editing and some light effects raised an additional issue for a small number of viewers. There were reports that this scene caused seizures in some audience members in cinemas in the US. Following coverage of this story in a UK national newspaper, there were some reports of a small number of similar incidents in UK cinemas. The BBFC takes these public health matters seriously, and advises distributors to notify cinema goers of any potential risks caused by strong light effects in their works. In the case of *Breaking Dawn*, and following publicity around the US reports, the BBFC requested that cinemas displayed such a warning.

Where light effects raise a more obvious risk to those with photosensitive epilepsy, the BBFC will, where appropriate, include an additional warning in Consumer Advice and its extended information for consumers on the BBFC's websites and apps.

The 15-rated *Black Swan* received the most complaints from audiences in 2011. The film generated forty complaints and although this is a high number for the BBFC, compared to the 2.7 million people who saw the



Black Swan '15'

film in cinemas it is a proportionately very small indeed. The standout issue for most was a sex scene in which one female character performs cunnilingus on another. While the scene is visually discreet, narratively justified and within the 15 Guidelines criteria, some correspondents felt it was pornographic in nature. That it was a sex scene between two women was an aggravating factor for some who argued that portrayals of homosexual activity should either be restricted to the 18 category, or not shown at all. However, the BBFC in line with broad public opinion, applies the same standards to portrayals of sexual activity, regardless of sexual orientation. The high number of complaints for *Black Swan* demonstrates the disconnect that sometimes occurs between a viewer's expectations of a film and its actual content. Some complainants had expected to see a film about ballet rather than the story of a young woman's mental disintegration. This highlights the importance of the BBFC's Consumer Advice which gives the audience more information about a film's content. In this case, the Consumer Advice warned that *Black Swan* contains strong sex, strong language and bloody images.

A number of popular 15-rated 'gross-out' comedies, including *Horrible Bosses*, *The Inbetweeners Movie* and *Bridesmaids*, generated a small number of complaints about the perceived crudity of these films and their suitability for fifteen year olds. *The Hangover – Part II* received the most complaints (nine). In all cases BBFC Extended Classification Information (ECI) gave details of the content of the films.

The BBFC's decision to refuse to issue a certificate to *The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* provoked a fierce debate. Some argued the BBFC was being unfair and arbitrary in its decisions, acting against civil liberties and freedom of artistic expression and targeting horror works with more severe treatment. Others were grateful the BBFC was intervening against works of this nature and drawing a line on the acceptability of content.

In October, the Prime Minister launched the ParentPort website. The site is a single point of contact for parents to raise concerns about media content they believe to be unsuitable for their child, including films and DVDs. The site is the work of seven UK media regulators: the Advertising

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Where light effects raise a more obvious risk to those with photosensitive epilepsy, the BBFC will, where appropriate, include an additional warning in Consumer Advice  
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Standards Authority (ASA), the Authority for Television on Demand (ATVOD), the BBC Trust, Ofcom, the Press Complaints Commission (PCC), the Video Standards Council (VSC) and the BBFC. The site makes the process of making a complaint easier by directing parents to the right regulator for their specific area of concern. It also provides a 'Have Your Say' section, where parents can provide informal feedback and comments that each of the regulators use as an extra gauge of parental views.

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Public feedback is important to the BBFC as it provides an immediate response to its decisions and helps shape the research  
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While the BBFC does not classify works as 'exempt', it regularly receives complaints questioning the exempt status of a wide variety of video works and criticising the lack of any advice about their content. In 2011, there were complaints against music videos by artists such as The Flaming Lips and Beyoncé, as well as sex education material used in schools and documentaries on the Second World War and famous train crashes, amongst others.

And finally, the BBFC also receives complaints about a range of issues outside its remit, or for which it is unable to provide an answer. In an unusual case this year, the BBFC responded to six complaints about a film it had not classified, or indeed – as far as it was aware – was not even being made. Online reports appeared provocatively around Easter of a film being produced which portrayed Jesus and his disciples as homosexuals. The complainants were incensed at this report and requested that the BBFC refuse to classify the film.

- 1 *Let Me In* '15'
- 2 *Africa United* '12A'



2

The public, educational professionals and students continued to value our education work, and therefore to demand more from us during 2011. We were happy to increase the range and scope of our work to empower consumers and explain film classification to students, their parents and teachers. Part of our education effort touches on why people should view legal product and shun pirated copies of favourite films and TV

shows. We will continue these messages in 2012 and beyond.

Our main customers remain Film and Media Studies, A Level and GCSE and BTEC students, though 2011 saw a conscious and targeted diversification of audience.

We continued to undertake work with university groups, both those engaged in practical filmmaking courses and

those looking specifically at the academic study of censorship and the role of the BBFC in the British film industry. This year we also gave presentations on classification for younger audiences to groups studying Early Childhood, at University Campus Suffolk, Ipswich and introduced our work to CGI Animators and visualisers at Bournemouth and Poole College Campus, and to international students

at the Institute of European Studies (IES) in Bloomsbury. 2011 also had an international flavour as we spoke to international delegates studying Film, Governance and Society and media students from Voss Husflidskule in Norway. Collaborations with arts venues across the UK included work

at Edinburgh Filmhouse, Manchester Cornerhouse, Warwick Arts Centre, Cinema City in Norwich and the Robert Burns Centre in Dumfries, presenting all-day study sessions on specific films, such as *Africa United*, *Kick-Ass* and *Let Me In*, and participating in A Level conferences

and open lectures for members of the public. Outside the school terms, we worked at a grassroots level with youngsters starting out in the film industry, running sessions at three of the Co-operative British Youth Film Academies during the summer.



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- 1 *Kick-Ass* '15'
- 2 *Attack the Block* '15'
- 3 *The Secret of Kells* 'PG'

Education team members also travelled to several arts and film festivals, with first time visits to the Hay Literary Film Festival (to talk with school groups in partnership with Film Club) and the Foyle Film Festival in Northern Ireland where we gave a series of tailored events on classifying true stories and documentaries, and a masterclass on *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. We also presented sessions at the Cinemagic International Film and Television Festival For Young People in Belfast, the Glasgow Youth Film Festival and the Zoom Film Festival in Pontypridd.

Our long lasting relationship with Film Education continued. The highlight was our contribution to National Schools Film Week. Examiners gave masterclasses on classification in 14 cities in England, Scotland and Wales, to both primary and secondary students. Primary school audiences viewed *The Secret of Kells*, while secondary school students discussed *Black Swan*, *Attack the Block*, *Let Me In*, *127 Hours* and *Winter's Bone*. Resources on all these films were made available to teachers and published on our education websites.



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## Media Education



All three education websites continue to thrive with new content and enhanced contact us sections allowing different users (teachers, parents, students) to comment on classification, and of course book visits, request case studies and order resources. We invited parents to ask for Extended Classification Information (ECI) for older works, classified before the BBFC provided such comprehensive information. This



1 *Winter's Bone* '15'

2 *127 Hours* '15'

## Accountability

'vintage' ECI which is published on PBBFC has proved popular with parents and teachers.

On our students website we published articles exploring classification across the globe and added to the cannon of Case Studies, which remain popular with A Level students and undergraduates. New studies on controversial works from the past include: *Watership Down*, *Pink Flamingos*, *The Trip*, *Maitresse*, *Henry Portrait of a Serial Killer*, *La Bete – The Beast*, *Sweet Movie*, *Hustler White*. In response to considerable interest from students we also produced case studies on more recent works *Grotesque* and *A Serbian Film*. In the Autumn term we amended our standard education presentations to include careful analysis of the *The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* to reflect an increased number of questions from younger viewers about that work.

## Media Education



3 *A Serbian Film* '18'

4 *Maitresse* '18'



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All three  
education  
websites continue  
to thrive with new  
content and  
enhanced  
'contact us'  
sections  
”

In addition to research commissioned by the BBFC into its customers' needs and the value the public places on BBFC ratings and content advice in the digital age, to which David Cooke and Quentin Thomas refer earlier in this Report, the BBFC published the results of independent research into public attitudes towards depictions of discrimination and discriminatory language in films and videos. This research found that the public believes the BBFC should continue to consider discrimination when classifying works and that where appropriate it should warn the public of such content in BBFC content advice. Racism was more of a concern than discrimination based on

“ Racism was more of a concern than discrimination based on disability or sexuality ”

disability or sexuality. Members of minority groups recognised that they were a more sensitive audience but argued that the BBFC should classify works with the broader public in mind.

This same research also considered the issue of exempt videos. Members of the public were shown videos available on sale in the UK which were claiming exemption from classification. Overwhelmingly, all participants in the research argued



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that the BBFC must classify all content in videos which is potentially harmful to children to keep that content away from impressionable children, and that any video work with such content which is presently exempt from classification should lose that exemption.

*A full copy of this research is available on the BBFC's website.*



2

As new means of accessing video content are developed, we continue to develop our groundbreaking online classification system, BBFC.online. The scheme was established in partnership with the home entertainment industry and serves as a model of self-regulation; a voluntary system that offers our trusted classifications and instantly recognisable symbols across all manner of platforms.

This exciting fast-paced industry continued to develop in 2011 as new players entered the market and established ones sought to cement their positions. Our membership has grown over the last twelve months with a focus on the platforms where the public can obtain content – either by rental or sale. New members include Netflix, an online rental service which has been an important player in the United States: it has now launched in the UK and we are

delighted they chose to use our classifications. BT Vision are the first of our aggregator members to include the online version of our iconic theatrical black card before each of their films; the cards are inextricably linked with the cinemagoing experience and their inclusion gives BT's customers a real flavour of going to the pictures. Talk Talk will be offering a similar experience to their customers when they launch their new premium packages in 2012. BlinkBox, the digital delivery service offered by Tesco, are also members, using our classifications to provide their customers with the information that they need to help inform their viewing decisions.

BBFC.online has had a good year, and we continued to work on our offering. In order to make our classifications as widely available as possible, we made changes to the service so that members have access to a much

“ This exciting fast-paced industry continued to develop in 2011 as new players entered the market ”

wider range of decisions –over 187,000 pieces of content received digital classification during 2011. This means that everything we have classified since 2011 is now available for use by our members. We also revised our pricing structure to make membership more attractive to smaller providers and created a new service – Watch and Rate – to offer classifications to content that will only ever be released online. Warner Bros., Lionsgate, Entertainment One and Curzon have all taken advantage of this service and we expect it to grow in popularity.

Finally, the BBFC.online team have been working with our public policy team to brief MPs and other legislators with an interest in the sector. Like a number of his colleagues, Culture Minister Ed Vaizey saw the service in action during 2011 and is a supporter.

## Enforcement

Under the terms of the Video Recordings Act 1984 it is illegal to supply an unclassified work on DVD, Blu-ray or any other video format in the UK, unless it is exempt from classification. The BBFC provides support to police and Trading Standards officers by issuing

Certificates of Evidence in respect of seized works. In 2011 a total of 116 cases were processed by the BBFC, of which 45 cases (276 works) related to seized media items and 67 cases (1,104 titles) were based on the title alone. This service remains a vital part of the BBFC's committed support to

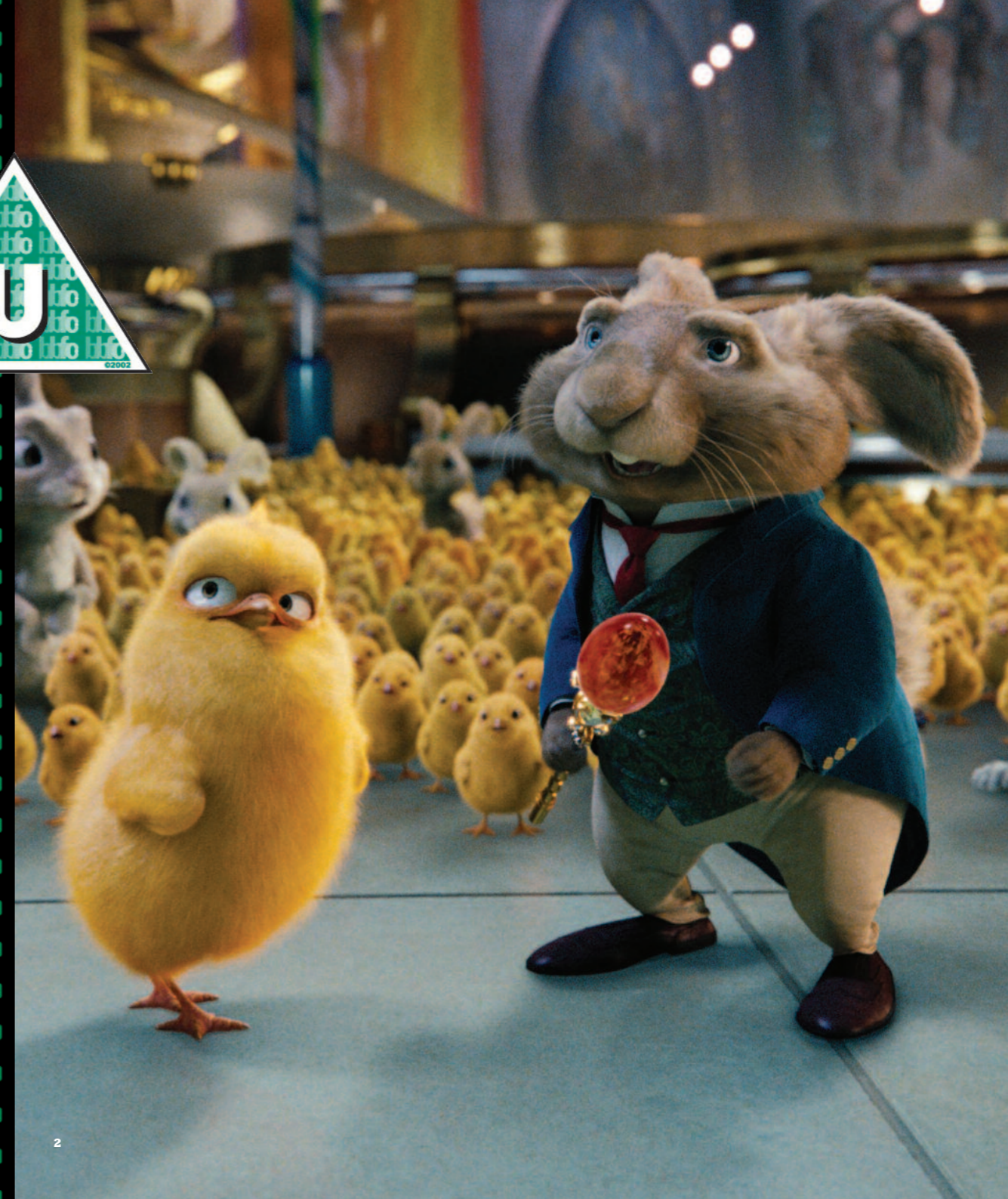


## Accountability

the industry in its effort against intellectual property theft. The ongoing digitisation of the BBFC's archive of video works has helped to increase the speed at which the BBFC can carry out technical comparisons between classified works and the corresponding seized versions.

1 *Cowboys & Aliens*  
'12A'

2 *Hop* 'U'





## U Universal

The BBFC's Classification Guidelines state that 'a U film should be suitable for audiences aged four years and over. U films should be set within a positive moral framework and offer reassuring counterbalances to any violence, threat or horror'. Although U is the lowest of the film categories, U films are not always 'squeaky clean' or free of issues. When deciding whether a film can be classified U, the BBFC takes into account issues such as language, sex, violence and imitable behaviour, alongside the broader areas of morality, behaviour, tone and impact. U films should make a clear distinction between right and wrong, as well as between appropriate and undesirable behaviour, so the BBFC considers anti-social activities such as stealing, as well as 'manners' issues.

As well as not being always issue-free, U films are also not always specifically aimed at children, and documentaries and old films can be passed U if the



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treatment is appropriate and the issues lack detail. One example is *The Great White Silence*, the newly restored version of the 1924 silent black and white documentary about Scott's expedition to the Antarctic from 1910 to 1913. The original film was classified U and the new version was

also passed at the same category. There are three uses of the term 'nigger' in the inter-titles, but these refer specifically to the name of the ship's cat. The word is not used in a derogatory manner against other people, nor is it used or intended to cause racial offence. While the BBFC takes racial discrimination very seriously, it also makes allowances for historical works. For these reasons, and within this very specific context, the BBFC allowed the use of the term at U. Another example of U films not specifically aimed at children in 2011 was *Babies*, a documentary following the first year of the lives of four babies born in different countries, which includes various scenes of breast feeding and naked babies at play. Although the American MPAA passed the film PG for 'cultural and maternal nudity', the BBFC's Guidelines permit 'occasional natural nudity, with no sexual context' at U. The accompanying Consumer Advice for



## U Universal

*Babies* was 'Contains natural nudity'.

An issue which the BBFC must consider at all categories is that of imitable behaviour. At the U level, there should be 'no potentially dangerous behaviour which young children are likely to copy', as well as 'no emphasis on realistic or easily accessible weapons'. *Alvin and the Chipmunks – Chipwrecked* is the third in a series of comedy films about a group of singing chipmunks and their human manager. The BBFC passed the film U for mild comic threat. However, a cinema goer complained about the use of a Swiss Army penknife by the main chipmunk character, Alvin. The visual and verbal references to penknives were, however, responsibly handled by the

film makers. There are three scenes involving the Swiss army knife. In the first one, the adult human, Dave, immediately confiscates the knife from Alvin, saying 'You could cut yourself', which is a clear verbal warning about the dangers of knives, including penknives. In a later scene of danger, Dave throws the closed knife at Alvin, who uses it to cut a rope in order to free another chipmunk. In another scene on a raft, Dave instructs Alvin to use the knife to signal the rescue helicopter above them. In order to do this, Alvin catches the sunlight on the blade. These uses are properly supervised, with Dave and others close to hand. The penknife is not used irresponsibly, nor in a dangerous manner but is used in the context of rescuing people. The message in the

“  
U films should be set within a positive moral framework and offer reassuring counterbalances to any violence, threat or horror  
”

- 1 *The Great White Silence* 'U'
- 2 *Babies* 'U'
- 3 *Alvin and the Chipmunks – Chipwrecked*, 'U'



3

film is very clear, that knives are dangerous, but that in certain situations and used responsibly under supervision, they can be used to help others.

As with imitable behaviour, violence is an area that greatly concerns parents and the BBFC. *Cars 2*, the sequel to the successful animated feature about racing car Lightning McQueen and his friends, was classified U for mild violence. A small number of viewers complained about the violence and threat directed towards the 'humanised' car characters, in particular a scene involving a car being 'tortured' for information and sequences in which cars crash into each other in races and are zapped by a ray gun device.



## U Universal

However, the characters are cars and not humans. They do not suffer human injuries, nor is there any sense of them being in pain. The 'torture' scene was discreetly handled, as the car is told that if he does not cooperate, his fuel will be heated up until it combusts. This is simply suggested by the reflection of some flames rather than by showing the car exploding.

The issue of 'manners' is one that the BBFC takes into account when classifying films at the junior categories. In 2011 two films in particular featured some mild rude humour, *The Muppets* and *Horrid Henry - The Movie*. The brief rude humour in *The Muppets* occurs when one of the characters puts on a pair of what he calls 'fart shoes', which make 'rude' noises when he walks. The noises are briefly heard again when the Muppets leave a silent theatre. In



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*Horrid Henry - The Movie*, as would be expected of a story about a naughty young boy, there are various 'fart', 'snot' 'burp' and 'bogey' references and jokes. As the character is well-known to children and the humour is essentially innocent, there was limited potential for offence and so the BBFC classified the film U and highlighted the 'rude humour' in the Consumer Advice.

At U, the Guidelines permit 'mild sexual behaviour (for example, kissing) and references only (for example, to 'making love')'. *Hop* is a comedy film, featuring live action and animated characters, about the Easter Bunny and a young man who team up to save the Easter holiday. The film, which the BBFC classified U for very mild language and slapstick violence, received three complaints from members of the public about what they felt were the mild sex references. These related to the use of the Playboy logo, Hugh Hefner's voice, and the Playboy mansion which was described as being 'home to the

sexiest bunnies in the world'. There is, however, no sight or description of the Playboy 'bunnies' that might suggest anything sexual about the scene, and young children are unlikely to understand the meaning of the logo or to know who Hugh Hefner is. Furthermore, the references occur as one of several knowing jokes intended for the adult audience, including to the 'bunny boiler' scene from *Fatal Attraction*, with which children will also be unfamiliar. There was also some mild innuendo in the animated feature and Shrek spin-off *Puss in Boots*. A man with tattoos featuring parts of the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' story starts to undo his trousers after offering to show the 'Golden Eggs' to someone else. However, he is stopped before anything is revealed. There is another scene in which a cat starts licking himself clean. The cat is unaware that a man is watching him until he says 'Don't let me stop you'. He is, however, exhibiting natural feline behaviour and young children who have cats at home are likely to find this funny.

- 1 *Puss in Boots* 'U'
- 2 *Jane Eyre* 'PG'



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“  
U films should  
make a clear  
distinction  
between right  
and wrong  
”



The PG category is used to classify works that may appeal to children aged eight years and over, but which may contain material that departs from the safe, non-threatening world presented to younger children in films and DVDs at the U category. PG works may also present themes, language and behaviour that might offend or confound the expectations of parents had they been classified at the lower category. Some works which have little or no obvious appeal to children, but whose themes and issues are handled in a suitably restrained, discreet and sensitive manner, also find a place at PG.

2011 saw the release of a number of high-profile films aimed at junior and family audiences, including a number of much-anticipated sequels.

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**Discrimination  
 by a character  
 with which  
 children can  
 readily identify  
 is unlikely to  
 be acceptable**  
 ”



Steven Spielberg brought the popular literary character Tintin to the big screen in the animated action adventure *The Adventures of Tintin – The Secret of the Unicorn*. This features scenes in which the hero and his accomplices face a series of threats and danger. Some of these scenes are prolonged and contain tense chases, fights or characters being killed with gunfire, but the violence is delivered in a fast-paced and rapidly-edited style that does not focus on detail but rather places the emphasis on the ‘rollercoaster’ nature of the action. Many of the scenes also occur within a fantastical context and contain comedy elements which reduce their impact, allowing them to pass at PG where the BBFC’s



Guidelines state ‘Moderate violence, without detail, may be allowed, if justified by its context (for example, history, comedy or fantasy)’. Elements of comedy and fantasy are also factors that mitigate the violence and use of weapons in two sequels: the animated feature *Kung Fu Panda 2* and the live-action *Spy Kids – All the Time in the World*. In both films, the accent is on the adventures in which the heroic characters find themselves and through which they display bravery and resourcefulness. There is also some wordplay in *Spy Kids – All the Time in the World* involving the phrase ‘shitake mushrooms’, but this is familiar as a running joke through all the previous *Spy Kids* films.

Rowan Atkinson returned as the bumbling secret agent in the spy spoof sequel *Johnny English Reborn*. The film was seen for advice by the BBFC resulting in changes being made prior to the work being submitted for formal classification. The final version contains moments of slapstick violence, innuendo and some mild language, all of which are firmly embedded in a familiar comic context. Advice viewings are a useful service to film companies requiring a specific category and enable a distributor to make any changes necessary to secure the desired

- 1 *Kung Fu Panda 2* ‘PG’
- 2 *Johnny English Reborn* ‘PG’
- 3 *Spy Kids – All the Time in the World* ‘PG’
- 4 *Mr. Popper’s Penguins* ‘PG’



category at an early stage. Another use of the advice service in 2011 was the Jim Carrey comedy *Mr. Popper’s Penguins* which is a film with broad family appeal in which mild comic threat and jokes about flatulence (the kind of rude humour in which children delight and which is recognised by most parents as being not unduly offensive) are contained at PG. However, a version of the work seen for advice contained a throwaway and unchallenged use of the term ‘spaz’ that breached the BBFC’s Guidelines on discrimination at PG. These state ‘Discriminatory language or behaviour is unlikely to be acceptable unless clearly disapproved of or in an educational or historical context. Discrimination by a character with which children can readily identify is unlikely to be acceptable’. Given the film’s obvious appeal to a young



audience, the BBFC advised the company to remove or substitute the word to secure the desired PG. In contrast to this, the PG-rated Tamil film, *Deivathirumagal – God’s Own Child*, which tells the story of a man with learning difficulties who fights for the custody of his small daughter, sees the central character being referred to as ‘nutcase’, ‘loony’ and ‘retarded’. However, the discriminatory language is clearly being used out of ignorance and is always challenged either directly or by the work as a whole which presents an inspiring and uplifting story of an individual’s struggle against adversity.

*The Artist*, the Oscar winning homage to the era of silent cinema, contains very little in the way of classification issues but the BBFC gave careful consideration to a scene in which the despairing hero contemplates suicide

and places a pistol in his mouth. After this, the screen cuts to black and the intertitle ‘Bang!’ appears on screen in the style of a silent film. However it is revealed to the audience that the bang has been caused by the heroine crashing her car into a tree outside in her haste to help her friend the hero whom we then see unharmed. The build-up of tension and despair, coupled with the sight of the gun in the mouth and the initial uncertainty about the hero’s fate, have the potential to cause anxiety for younger viewers. However, taking into account the manner in which it is presented, along with the accompanying elements of comedy and reassurance, the BBFC considered the scene was acceptable at PG where the Guidelines state ‘Frightening sequences should not be prolonged or intense’.



## PG Parental Guidance



In 2011 the cinema adaptation of Charlotte Bronte's novel *Jane Eyre*, is another film with limited appeal to children and contains some scenes of violence and a slightly unsettling tone as well as a moment of bloody injury detail. However, the violence, which occurs in the context of a well known literary work and within a historical setting, does not focus on detail and meets the requirements of the Guidelines at PG. The injury detail occurs in a scene where Jane is tending to the wound on a man's back. As well as sight of blood, there is a brief close-up of the damaged flesh and tissue, along with some blood on his neck as she helps him. However, the scene is filmed in a shadowy light that places no undue focus on the gory detail of the wound. The emphasis is on the dramatic aspects of the event and on characterisation with Jane displaying a calm and level-headed approach to coming to the victim's aid.

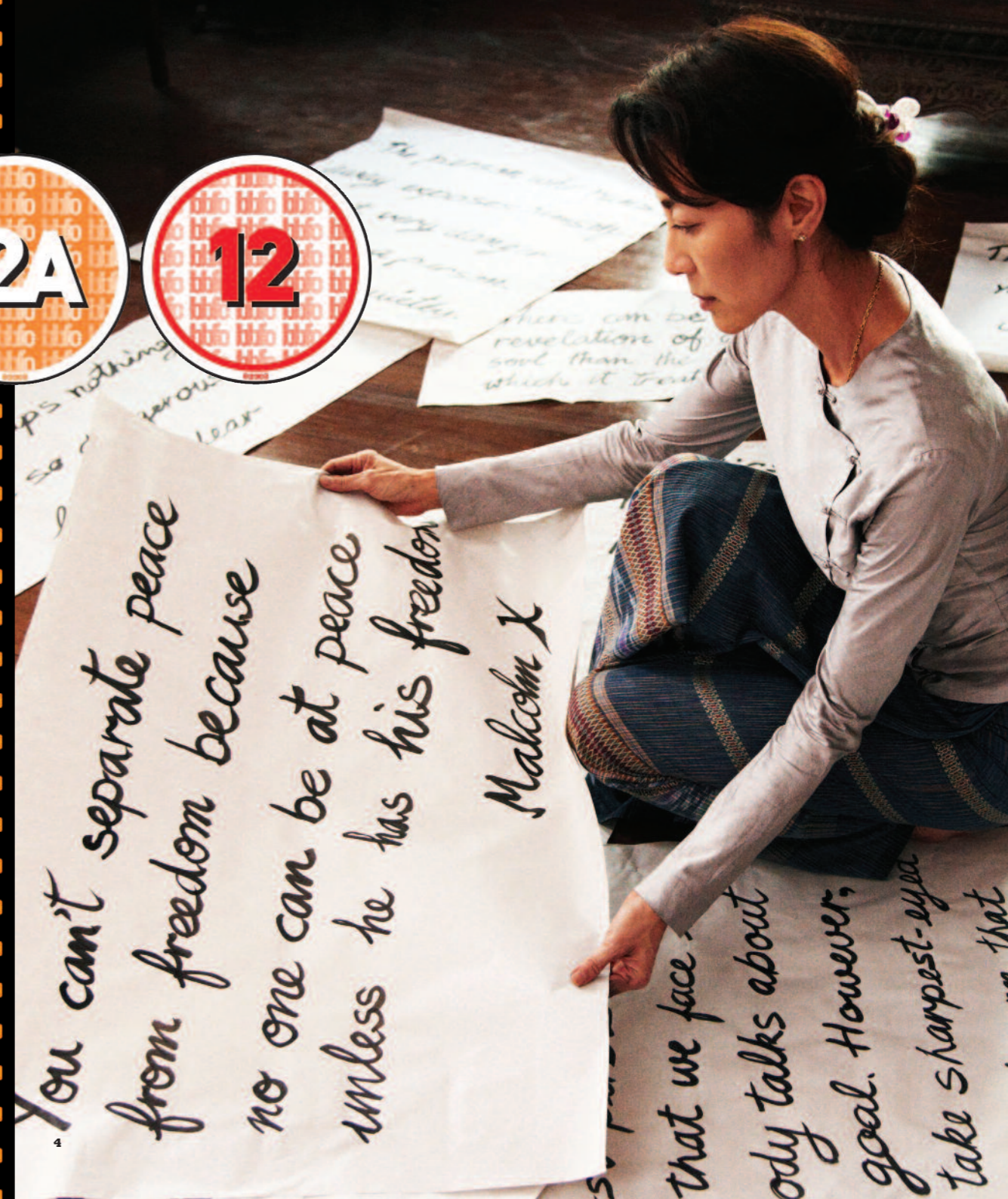
*Honey 2* is a sequel which takes up the story of a new central character, a young woman attempting to put her troubled past behind her when she joins a street dance team competing

in a national televised contest. Some mild language, sex references and violence presented in a story that offers positive messages about self-esteem and earning respect were permissible at PG but four uses of moderate language ('bitch' and 'dick') required a minimum 12A classification. The company then chose to withdraw the classified version of the film and submit a re-edited version with all four uses of moderate language replaced with milder language, so allowing the film to be released at PG. However, it is not only language that can be considered offensive. Hindi film *Rockstar*, is classified PG for mild language, violence and one rude gesture.



- 1 *Rockstar* 'PG'
- 2 *Honey 2* 'PG'
- 3 *The Artist* 'PG'
- 4 *The Lady* '12A'

Towards the end of the film the central character makes a rude middle figure gesture, the BBFC's Guidelines state that 'the offensiveness of such gestures is likely to vary according to 'the context in which the [...] gesture is used'. The gesture in the film is not aggressive or directed at any other character, but is better placed at the PG category.



12A continues to be a sought after category for film distributors, particularly for the current crop of major franchises. 2011 saw instalments from *Transformers*, *Pirates Of The Caribbean* and *Twilight* and we said a dramatic goodbye to *Harry Potter*.

*Twilight Breaking Dawn – Part 1*, featured a sex scene and a gory 'birthing' scene. The sex scene was well telegraphed as a central feature of the film as vampire Edward consummates his marriage to his human love Bella. The distributor showed an unfinished version of the film to the BBFC for advice and was advised it was likely to receive a 15. To achieve the desired 12A, the BBFC suggested reducing the strength of the sex scene, including the sight of Edward thrusting while he lay on top of

Bella, and while her legs are wrapped around his torso. These changes were made and the BBFC classified the film 12A. A later scene, in which Bella goes through a somewhat bloody birthing, prompted complaints from some cinema-goers for being too gory. The film's fantastical context, under the Guidelines at 12A, allows the 'occasional gory moment' to be passed 12A.

*Transformers – Dark Of The Moon* featured scenes of fantastical violence, largely between mechanical characters, and a single use of 'fuck'. Infrequent strong language is allowed at 12A and a single use is not uncommon at that category. However this use stood out for some viewers in a film based on children's toys that clearly had appeal to a young audience.

The BBFC faced an unusual language issue in crime caper *Tower Heist*. In the film, a sympathetic Jamaican character shouts 'bumbaclot' as she rushes a trolley at a security guard. The Caribbean colloquialism can be very offensive to those who know its origins, but its use would probably go unnoticed by the majority of the audience. As a single use in comedy context however, the BBFC passed the film at 12A. The film also includes self referential uses of the word 'nigger'. Although the word has potential for offence if used aggressively, self referential uses may in context reduce the likelihood of offence. At the top end of the 12A category, *George Harrison – Living in the Material World* contained six uses of 'fuck'. However the Martin Scorsese

- 1 *Transformers – Dark Of The Moon* '12A'
- 2 *Tower Heist* '12A'



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documentary is three and a half hours long, allowing the thinly spread uses to be considered 'infrequent'.

*Hanna* and *Cowboys & Aliens* were both classified 12A for violence. Joe Wright's *Hanna* places a 16 year old girl as an assassin. The film includes some crunchy fights and a neck break during an interrogation, but is sparing

in detail, with very little in the way of blood or injuries. *Cowboys & Aliens* has a more obviously fantastical context in which the two sides battle in a traditional Western setting. In this film, the level of injury detail prompted a few complaints and the film certainly reached the top end of what is acceptable at 12A under the BBFC's published Guidelines.



Among the big Diwali releases this year, India produced the epic science fiction thriller, *Ra.One*. In the film, a video gamer is confronted by a character from within an elaborate new game. The BBFC classified the film 12A for moderate fantasy violence in six different versions including 3D, 2D and dubs in Hindi, Telugu and Tamil.

Steven Soderburgh's tale of a worldwide flu pandemic, *Contagion*, contains some scenes that may upset

younger viewers and a bleak tone. The brief sight of a flap of skin from a skull during a post mortem examination was the sort of 'occasional gory moment' which the BBFC's Guidelines allow for, particularly in a film which focuses on the scientific search for a cure rather than on any gratuitous suffering of the pandemic's victims.

The realistic, almost documentary feel to *Contagion*, was also present in aspects of *The Lady*, which tells the

story of the Burmese opposition campaigner Aung San Suu Kyi. In the film, based on real events, a doctor is gunned down in a hospital and other moments of state violence are shown. Although the realistic setting could have raised the impact of the violence, the film presents a strong positive tone that enabled such moments to be placed in context and passed at 12A.

WWE wrestling is a hugely popular form of entertainment in the United

- 1 *Cowboys & Aliens* '12A'
- 2 *Ra.One* '12A'

States and it enjoys a significant following in the UK. Each year the BBFC receives a large number of submissions from the franchise culminating in the video release of the pay-per-view event '*Wrestlemania*'. In the past, some bloodletting and use of bars and other makeshift weapons has put such works routinely to 15. However some WWE videos had more of a family orientation in 2011, which prompted the BBFC to look at how wrestling works in general are classified. The result being the BBFC classified more WWE works at 12 than 15 in 2011. All WWE videos contain a 'do not attempt this at home' style warning at the beginning.

Over the years *Doctor Who* has provided scares for a junior audience. In 2011 an episode entitled *The God Complex* provided a genuinely sinister story and set of images. Set in a 1980s British hotel, the Doctor and his crew are confronted by their own fears. The episode involves some traditional horror tropes and it was classified 12 as an indication that some younger children may well find it a little too frightening.

Zack Snyder's *Sucker Punch* takes place largely in the made up fantasy world of a teenage girl awaiting a grisly fate in a mental institution. In her imagined world she performs as a burlesque dancer in a club that also offers sexual favours to its clients. In the film, the club forms part of the world that the girl and her friends want to escape from, there is no nudity and the lifestyle is not presented in a particularly positive light.

After 26 years at PG the legendary US comedy *Ghostbusters* was classified at 12A. The film was resubmitted for a modern cinema classification and the level of sex references was judged to be more appropriate at the higher category. It is worth noting that when the film was classified in 1985, the BBFC did not have a 12 or 12A category, with the choice being between PG and 15 only.

*Little Fockers* is the third comedy in the series starring Ben Stiller and Robert De Niro. The theatrical version of the film was classified and released in late 2010, with the DVD and Blu-Ray version classified in February 2011. As with the two previous films, the BBFC passed *Little Fockers* at 12A on film and 12 on video. The stand out scene for many viewers was a scene in which the De Niro character has an unwanted erection as a result of taking a Viagra



pill. Some viewers felt the level of sex reference was strong for 12A. The BBFC's Guidelines state that 'Sex references should not go beyond what is suitable for young teenagers. Frequent crude references are unlikely to be acceptable'. In the case of *Little Fockers* the BBFC considered that the references did not contain any strong detail or go beyond what most adolescents are familiar with.

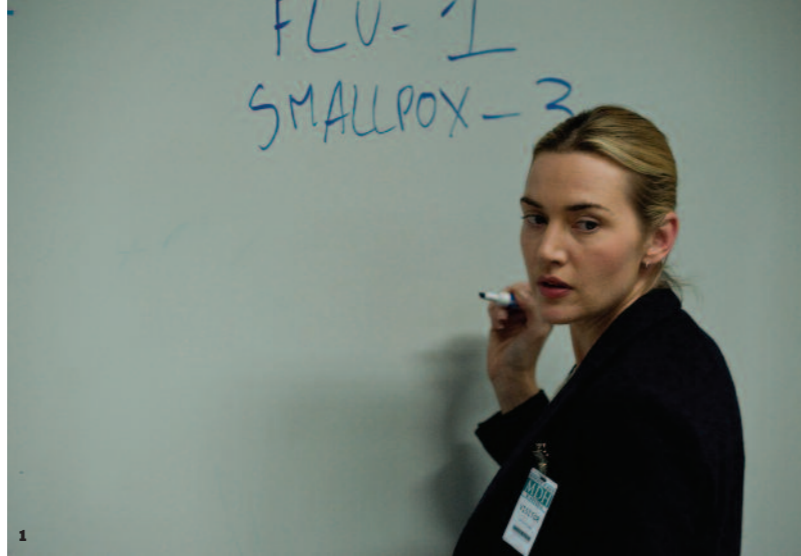
*A Better Life* deals with the issue of migrant Mexican workers in Southern California. An earnest father worries about his hot headed son who seems destined to fall in with the gangs in south central LA. The film manages to create a strong impact while keeping the detail of violence to a minimum and the film includes only one use of strong language. This allowed it a wider audience at 12A.



## 12A Cinema 12 DVD

*My Dog Tulip* is an animated story based on the literary critic J.R. Ackerly's autobiographical account of his life with his pet German Shepherd. The film includes some crudely drawn scenes of sexual encounters between humans and mating sequences involving the dog. However the lack of detail and gently affectionate tone allowed the work to be passed at 12.

The BBFC receives a large number of works for DVD and Blu-Ray that started their lives on TV. The versions submitted to the BBFC are not always the same as the versions transmitted, and increasingly episodes are submitted to the BBFC before being transmitted on TV. Such was the case with the BBC's second series of *Sherlock* which featured a naked woman in the opening episode, although her breasts and groin area were blocked from view. The last of the three episode featured the 'death' of Sherlock in a suicidal leap from the roof of St Bart's hospital in London. The impact was not clearly seen, but an aftermath view showed some pooling of blood. The BBFC's Guidelines at 12 allow for moderate violence and nudity, although in a sexual context the nudity must be 'brief and discreet'. In both cases the issues were appropriately placed at 12. When the opening episode was transmitted by BBC Television before the watershed, the Corporation received a number of complaints. While it is not possible to draw direct comparisons between the BBFC's 12 category and the BBC's compliance criteria surrounding its



1 *Contagion* '12A'

2 *J. Edgar* '15'

own 'watershed', material passed 12 by the BBFC often equates to mid evening, pre-watershed slots on television.

Stand up comedy on DVD frequently ends up at the higher categories because of strong language and sex references, but a short routine submitted as a 'DVD extra' for *Jethro – The Cornish Ambassador* found itself on the PG/12 border. The routine by the west country comedian contains only mild bad language but it was so frequent and became such a major part of the routine, that it was passed 12 in line with public expectations that frequent and persistent language should in some cases cause a work to be classified at a higher category than a single, or infrequent, use would suggest.

Dated attitudes often turn up as an issue in older material that is submitted to the BBFC for a modern classification. In 2011 we received three series of the 1970s British television sitcom *Love Thy Neighbour*. The programme plays off the racist attitudes of one character,

while those around him, including his wife, appear to live in harmony with each other. Uses of racially derogatory language such as 'sambo' and 'nignog' are therefore placed in a specific context that may even be read as a form of implicit condemnation, as the racist character is portrayed as a buffoon. However the laughs are still generated from the racial abuse and the BBFC passed each series at 12.

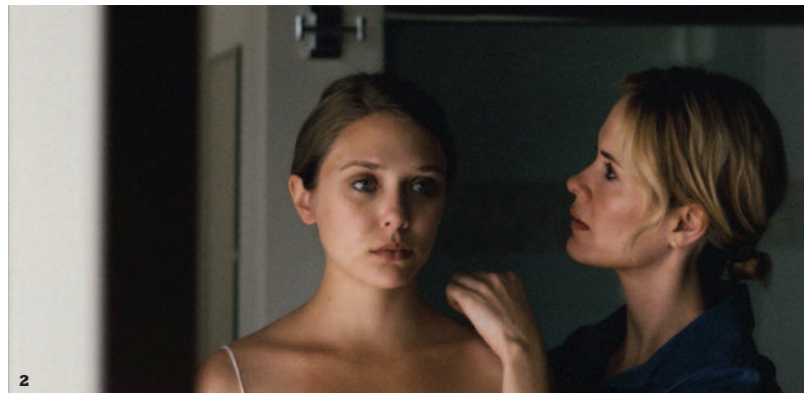
In line with the BBFC's findings following a major piece of research in 2011, the BBFC continues to take a firm line on discriminatory language in works aimed at junior categories. The family film *Marmaduke* about a large clumsy dog originally included a use of 'spaz' as an insult aimed at the eponymous canine. However the work was submitted to the BBFC for an advice screening ahead of its formal classification and the company was advised that the film would most likely be classified 12 for this language. The distributor chose to replace the use of 'spaz' with 'klutz' for the full submission which was classified PG.



As in 2010, we passed more cinema films at 15 in 2011 than at any other category, and once again they featured challenging themes and issues.

*We Need To Talk About Kevin* is a drama about a mother's relationship with her son who embarks on a murderous rampage at his school. Strong language, one use of very strong language, strong sex and sexualised nudity took the film to 15. Although the film deals with a disturbing subject, the restrained presentation of the bloody aftermath of the high-school massacre rather than of the killings themselves meant the film could be classified 15.

Suicide is a theme in the UK horror film *Demons Never Die*, in which a group of teenagers make a suicide pact, only to find themselves being murdered one by one by a mysterious killer. The frequency of strong language and one use of very strong language, bloody violence and drug



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use required a 15 certificate. Although the film begins with a proposed suicide pact, suicide is not presented as an answer to the characters' problems, nor is it presented in an attractive, glamorous, or pain-free manner. The film also places a significant emphasis on the things that make life worth living, as well as on the pain that suicide can cause to friends and family. As the film continues, the emphasis changes from suicide to a more conventional horror theme.

*Martha Marcy May Marlene* (classified in 2011, released in 2012) is a US film about a woman recovering from time spent with a cult. The film contains a sequence, set within a commune, during which a man has sex with a woman who is initially asleep. There is no nudity, sexual detail, or eroticisation of the act, and the film shows how the victims are manipulated into accepting this form of sexual assault. The scenes establish the woman's ordeal while under the



influence of the cult leader and are narratively important in showing the behaviour in the commune. The context and lack of strong detail meant they could be classified 15.

The BBFC's language Guidelines at 15 state 'there may be frequent use of strong language (for example, 'fuck'). The strongest terms (for example, 'cunt') may be acceptable if justified by the context. Aggressive or repeated use of the strongest language is unlikely to be acceptable'.

*J. Edgar* is a biopic of J. Edgar Hoover, the founder and director of the FBI. It contains only one use of strong language, which would have been permissible at 12A. However, two uses of cruder language (in this case 'cocksucker') were more appropriately classified at 15.

1 *We Need To Talk About Kevin* '15'

2 *Martha Marcy May Marlene* '15'

3 *Route Irish* '15'

4 *Wild Bill* '15'



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*My Week With Marilyn* is a drama about the relationship between a young assistant director and Marilyn Monroe during the filming of *The Prince and the Showgirl* in 1956. The film's distributor requested a 12A certificate, but the film contains seven uses of strong language, one of which is delivered in a sexualised context. This exceeds BBFC language Guidelines at 12A/12, and so the film is classified 15.

At the upper end of the 15 category, *Route Irish* concerns a former SAS soldier and private security contractor investigating the death of his best friend who had been killed while doing private security work in

Baghdad. Frequent strong language and scenes of torture meant the film could not be classified below 15. However, there are additionally up to seven uses of very strong language, although two uses are not particularly clear. The first five uses of very strong language occur in rapid succession during an angry outburst at a wake. The uses are male to male and not accompanied by violence or other aggravating factors such as a power imbalance, and are justified as part of an emotional outburst against inappropriate behaviour. Given the contextual justification for the use of very strong language and the lack of other aggravating factors, the BBFC classified the film 15.

The BBFC continues to take a strong line on drugs at 15. BBFC drugs Guidelines at 15 state that 'The misuse of easily accessible and highly dangerous substances (for example, aerosols or solvents) is unlikely to be acceptable'. In the British film *Wild Bill* (classified in 2011, released in 2012), a man reluctantly agrees to look after his two sons after his release from prison and comes into conflict with local drug dealers. The film contains scenes of cocaine snorting and a sequence showing crack cocaine being cooked. However, the film contains a clear anti-drugs message and those involved in dealing are presented as unattractive, thereby meeting the requirements of the BBFC's 15 where Guidelines which state 'Drug taking may be shown but the film as a whole must not promote or encourage drug misuse'.

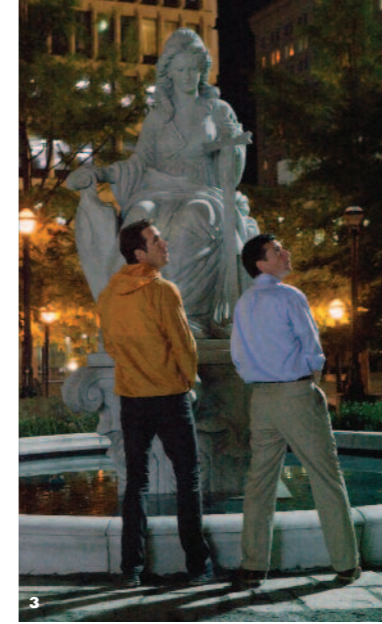
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Aggressive or  
repeated use of the  
strongest language  
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Negative portrayals of hard drug use also featured in *Junkhearts* and *Oslo, August 31st*. In the former, a middle-aged man forms an unlikely friendship with a young homeless woman and, as well as strong language and sex, the film featured scenes of marijuana use and crack smoking within a bleak context of social deprivation. In *Oslo, August 31st*, a young man visits friends in Oslo on day release from a drug rehabilitation program. In one scene he prepares heroin using his belt as a tourniquet, after which he injects himself. There is a strong anti drug message in both films and neither promote nor encourage drug misuse, and they were therefore classified 15.

Drug misuse also featured in a comic context in episodes from two US TV shows. In an episode from the fifth series of *30 Rock*, a US comedy series about a network TV sketch show, a man who has decided to give up drinking is seen with his mouth and nose inside a large paint can and sniffing deeply before explaining 'I need the alcohol'. Although there is no direct criticism or suggestion that this is potentially dangerous, it is presented in deliberately exaggerated and less than credible fashion. The man is a sad and lonely attention-seeker, unlikely to be appealing to teenage viewers, and the activity is not presented as pleasurable; these factors allowed the episode to be classified 15.

- 1 *Junkhearts* '15'
- 2 *Oslo, August 31st* '15'
- 3 *The Change-Up* '15'
- 4 *Passenger Side* '15'



The BBFC's Guidelines on sex at 15 state that 'Sexual activity may be portrayed without strong detail. There may be strong verbal references to sexual behaviour, but the strongest references are unlikely to be acceptable unless justified by context. Works whose primary purpose is sexual arousal or stimulation are unlikely to be acceptable'.

At the upper end of the category, the US comedy *The Change-Up*, about the consequences of a busy father and an idle playboy swapping bodies after urinating into a magic fountain, contains several strong sex scenes. These include some crude verbal sexual references during a scene in which a man inadvertently finds himself acting in a soft core porn film. However, there is no strong sexual detail and the focus is on the comic discomfort of the man who finds himself in an unexpected situation. Other strong references in the film are used to illustrate a hedonistic and rebellious lifestyle which is challenged as the film develops.

*The Hangover - Part II* is a comedy sequel about a group of friends who lose one of their number during a stag party in Thailand. The film contains strong sex references and nudity, including a scene featuring graphic references when a transsexual describes a sexual encounter with the groom. The references are delivered in a matter-of-fact and descriptive fashion rather than in an erotic manner, and the predominant effect is comic as the groom gradually realises what he has done. One scene shows fully naked transsexual nightclub performers with their breasts and penises visible. Another sees a man touch an unidentified object and lick his finger, after this a monkey licks the object before tugging and hitting it, a man leaps up from beneath a pile of material, revealing that the object in question is in fact the man's comically small penis. These scenes are comic in nature rather than sexual. However, to secure the 15 category, the distributor made cuts to remove some

explicit images from the end credits following an advice viewing.

*The Inbetweeners Movie* is a British comedy based on the Channel 4 TV series. The film follows the main characters from the series who have finished their A Levels and decide to go on holiday to Crete. Cuts for the requested 15 were made at the advice stage to remove an aggressive use of very strong language, a particularly crude verbal sex reference, and to reduce the explicitness of two scenes of sexual activity. The BBFC subsequently classified the film 15 for strong and very strong language and strong sex references. The distributor reinstated the cuts for the Blu-ray release where the re-edited version and 'Writer's Cut' were classified 18.

*Passenger Side* is a comedy-drama about two brothers who spend a day driving around Los Angeles where they meet various characters and share strange experiences. There are two scenes of strong, but implied,





sexual activity, the first taking place in a car with a character masturbating and the second during the shooting of an adult film. Although both scenes feature nudity, there is no strong detail or focus on the mechanics of the sexual activity. Both scenes include strong sex references, such as those spoken by the director of the adult film as he instructs the performers on what he wants them to do. As in *The Hangover – Part II*, these references are presented in a matter-of-fact and descriptive fashion, and the predominant effect is comic rather than erotic. Therefore, the film was classified 15.

*Delhi Belly*, a Hindi comedy caper film in the manner of *The Hangover* features strong language and sex references which had raised concerns in India. These exceed BBFC Guidelines at 12A/12, but are acceptable at 15.

The BBFC required cuts to remove scenes of real sex shown on a television screen in the US rock band documentary *Talihina Sky – The Story Of Kings Of Leon*, in order for the film to secure the 15 category desired by the distributor.

*Immortals*, a fantasy adventure film based on some of the characters in ancient Greek mythology, also required cuts for a requested 15, in this case to reduce the stronger moments of violence and gore. These were made in accordance with the BBFC's Guidelines which state that 'Violence may be strong but should not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury. The strongest gory images are unlikely to be acceptable'.

Strong bloody violence was also a classification issue in *Goon* (classified in 2011, released in 2012), a Canadian drama about a man whose talent for

fighting is exploited by the coach of his local hockey team. Frequent scenes of strong violence in a sporting context include those in which players are repeatedly punched in the face and blood sprays from wounds. The sporting context offers significant mitigation which is increased when a player is punished for excessive violence, and the film received a 15 classification.

Strong violence and gore also feature in the 15-rated horror films *Scre4m* and *Final Destination 5*. These were sequels meaning the likely audience would be more familiar with the content. Like its predecessors, *Scre4m* has a knowingly comic and ironic edge that diminishes the impact of the rapidly edited attacks. The attacks generally follow a strong threatening build-up, but do not dwell on violent detail or feature the strongest gory



1 *Talihina Sky – The Story Of Kings Of Leon* '15'

2 *Immortals* '15'



3 *Scre4m* '15'

4 *Final Destination 5* '15'

images or sadism. *Final Destination 5*, in which groups of young people escape unscathed from a terrible accident only for Death to hunt them down later, features occasional strong bloody effects. However, they occur as a result of bizarre accidents, with the sense of threat built through anticipation about how the accidents will unfold, and there is no sadistic element to the violence and injuries.

The Hindi language film *Murder 2* is a dark psychological thriller that follows a rogue policeman on the trail of a serial killer of women. It was billed as India's first 'torture porn' film and contains strong bloody violence, language and sexualised images. However, the images do not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury and the violence is neither sadistic nor sexualised. Therefore, the film was classified 15.







As in 2010, two films classified PG-13 in the US (a category which allows them to be shown to all ages with the caveat that parents are cautioned that 'some material may be inappropriate for children under 13') were classified 15 in the UK rather than 12A. The first of these, *Dream House* is a psychological horror thriller about a family who discover that the previous occupants of their house were murdered. The film features sustained threat within a contemporary domestic setting, involving a young family. This context rendered the film

unsuitable for a 12A classification. It was more appropriately classified at 15 where the BBFC's Guidelines state 'Strong threat and menace are permitted unless sadistic or sexualised'. The second film is *The Roommate*, a thriller in which a female student gradually realises that her new female room-mate is a psychopathic stalker. The film builds up a strong and sustained sense of threat and menace as the true nature of the antagonist is gradually revealed. In one scene she stalks her victim's friend in the showers, attacking her



and ripping out her navel piercing. There are also scenes in which the stalker self-harms. There is little strong detail, but the sustained strong threat and menace, although neither sadistic nor sexualised, required a 15 certificate.

As in previous years, the BBFC had to consider a number of works resubmitted for re-release on film, or for release on DVD and Blu-ray, where the 18 classification previously awarded was no longer appropriate according to current standards. In many cases, these films are over twenty years old and their power or impact has diminished to the extent that they are now acceptable at 15. These films included *Cross Of Iron* (which was submitted for a modern cinema certificate), *The Music Lovers*, *Vampire Circus* and *The Deadly Spawn*.



- 1 *Dream House* '15'
- 2 *Vampire Circus* '15'
- 3 *The Roommate* '15'
- 4 *Cross Of Iron* '15'
- 5 *The Music Lovers* '15'
- 6 *Mother's Day* '18'



Where concerns arise about content in works at lower categories they can usually be dealt with by giving a higher classification. But at 18 the only option may be to cut or reject a work. Guidelines at 18 therefore reflect a desire to balance concerns about protecting rights to freedom of expression with a need to protect vulnerable individuals, and wider society, from the possible harmful effects of some film and video material. This position corresponds with the legal framework within which the BBFC operates; including the Human Rights Act 1998, the Video Recordings Act 1984, and the Obscene Publications Act 1959. The BBFC's Guidelines, underpinned by strong public support, respect the right of adults to decide for themselves what to watch. The BBFC tries to keep exceptions to this principle to a minimum.

Since its amendment in 1994, the Video Recordings Act has placed a duty on the BBFC to have 'special regard (among other relevant factors) to any harm that may be caused to potential viewers or, through their behaviour, to society by the manner in which the work deals with: criminal behaviour; illegal drugs; violent behaviour or incidents; or human sexual activity'. Throughout 2011 the BBFC has continued to give 'special regard' to harm issues using classifications at 18 where appropriate and cutting or rejecting material where necessary.

As in previous years, some of the most challenging material considered by the BBFC in 2011 concerned representations of sexual violence. The BBFC's Guidelines state that portrayals of sexual or sexualised violence which might, for example, eroticise or endorse sexual assault are likely to be cut even at 18.

*The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* is about a London car park attendant who is obsessed with *The Human Centipede (First Sequence)* and who decides to kidnap people to create his own centipede. Victims are stripped naked and their nudity is focused upon as violent acts are committed against them. The manner in which the film presents the largely anonymous victims invites little sympathy for them. Instead, it is the perpetrator's point of view which the viewer is invited to share. The film was originally refused a classification altogether. The distributor offered to make significant cuts to achieve an 18. The Presidents and Director gave careful consideration to the effect of the cuts offered, but determined that several further cuts would still be required. 32 cuts were written to scenes of sexual and sexualised violence, sadistic violence and humiliation, and a child presented in an abusive and violent context. Cuts included graphic sight of a man masturbating with sandpaper around his penis, sight of lips being stapled to naked buttocks, graphic focus on forced defecation into other people's

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mouths, and the graphic rape of a woman by a man with barbed wire wrapped around his penis. With these substantial cuts made, the film was passed 18, though the Board's press release made clear that one of the Vice Presidents, Gerard Lemos, would have preferred to maintain the rejection decision.

Robert Angelo  
Masciantonio's  
*Neighbor* '18'



The Chinese erotic period drama, *3D Sex and Zen Extreme Ecstasy*, contained extended sequences of titillatory sex and eroticised nudity. In this context, two scenes of sexual and sexualised violence in particular, both tending to eroticise and endorse the sexual assault, required cuts for 18.

The Canadian film, *Robert Angelo Masciantonio's Neighbor*, submitted for DVD release, was also cut for sexualised violence. In this horror feature about a young woman who terrorises a suburban neighbourhood, cuts were required to remove shots in which a man's genitals are mutilated after the woman seduces him.

Ruggero Deodato's 1980 film *House on the Edge of the Park* was submitted again for a DVD classification. It is 10 years since it was

last considered by the BBFC. However, cuts were still required to the sexualised assault of a young woman, specifically the close focus on a razor traced over, and cutting into, the skin of the naked woman. While fewer cuts were required than in 2001, the BBFC's strict policy on sexual violence meant the film could not be passed uncut.

The arguments that relate media effects to harm are less convincing where violence without a sexual element is concerned and the BBFC's treatment of non-sexual violence at 18 reflects this. The Board remains confident the differentiation in its treatment between sexual and non-sexual violence is substantiated by the available evidence and, additionally, that research undertaken to inform the BBFC Guidelines shows the general public supports this position.

As in previous recent years, no cuts were made on grounds of violence alone. However, violence in a number of works approached the limits of what would be allowed at the 18 classification.

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The supernatural action thriller, *Drive Angry*, in which a man escapes from hell to save his daughter and grand daughter, contains scenes of strong violence, gore, and some sexualised nudity, that required restriction to 18. In particular, the film includes a scene in which the central character is involved in an extended shoot-out while, it's implied, he continues to have sex with the naked woman wrapped around him. While there is no violence against the woman, this conflation of sex with the action violence could not be contained by Guidelines at 15. Another action thriller, *Hobo with a Shotgun*, contains a scene in which a man is beaten with a baseball bat that has razor blades embedded in it; this too could only be contained at 18.

*Drive*, about a Hollywood stunt driver who moonlights as a getaway driver for criminals, features scenes in which a man is stamped to death, including



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brief sight of the victim's crushed head, and a strong gory splatter as a woman is shot in the head. Both scenes place the film at an 18 classification.

The British film, *Kill List*, in which two hit men become embroiled with a mysterious cult, contains scenes of very strong and bloody violence

which required an 18 classification. Scenes include a man being tortured and then beaten to death with a hammer, and a scene in which a man's head is caved in after being repeatedly smashed against a wall. The dwelling on the infliction of pain and injury in these scenes went beyond the BBFC's Guidelines at 15.

*Cold Fish*, a Japanese black comedy, contains scenes of bloody violence and dismemberment in a serial killer context. In one scene a man murders a couple, stabbing them to death with a ball point pen. In another scene a murder victim is cut up in preparation for disposal. Despite some discretion in terms of blows landing on victims, the violence is very bloody. The film also contains strong sex and a scene of sexual violence which, while neither eroticised nor endorsed, underlined the need to restrict the film to adult audiences.

- 1 *Hobo with a Shotgun* '18'
- 2 *Kill List* '18'
- 3 *Cold Fish* '18'
- 4 *L'Empire Des Sens – In the Realm of the Senses* '18'
- 5 *Taxi Zum Klo* '18'



Under the BBFC's Guidelines, more explicit images of sexual activity must be justified by context, if they are to be allowed at 18. In the context of works whose primary purpose is sexual arousal or stimulation, (ie. 'sex works') images of real sex will normally be confined to R18.



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“ Under the BBFC's Guidelines, more explicit images of sexual activity must be justified by context, if they are to be allowed at 18 ”

The 1976 film, *L'Empire Des Sens – In the Realm of the Senses*, also known as *Ai no Corrida*, became a rare example of explicit images of real sex being allowed at 18 after it was first submitted for classification in 1989. But while sight of real sex was allowed, one scene was altered to hide the sight of a child's penis being tugged. In 2011 the film was submitted on DVD with this scene unaltered. With the benefit of current understanding of the Protection of Children Act 1978, the BBFC did not consider this non-sexual interaction to be in breach of the legislation, and therefore did not intervene with the scene. With this decision reached, an uncut version of the film was passed at 18 for the first time.

Another film submitted again in 2011, was the 1980 German semi-autobiographical feature, *Taxi Zum Klo*, about a teacher who spends his evenings engaging in promiscuous sexual behaviour. It was passed uncut for DVD release in 2005, but had not been given a theatrical certificate



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before 2011. It contains scenes of unsimulated sex between the lead character and his male partners, including a scene in which one man urinates into the mouth of another. In the context of this serious drama the BBFC passed these scenes at 18, and did not consider that the urination was a likely breach of the Obscene Publications Act 1959.

*Prostitute*, a dramatised documentary about prostitution in late 70s/early 80s Britain, was originally passed 'X' on film in 1980, with cuts to explicit sight of a man being masturbated while visiting a massage parlour. It is a bleak scene with no particular sexual charge. Under current Guidelines, this illustration of the unglamorous reality

of the sex trade could now be passed uncut for DVD release at 18.

The Irish comedy drama, *Sensation*, also submitted for a DVD release, features two sequences containing explicit images of real sex. In both cases the origins of the images are pornographic, specifically photographs in an adult magazine and a brief image from a pornographic video. But these images are only briefly seen and the video footage contains no clear explicit detail. While the nudity is sexualised in its original context, in this comedy drama the images reflect the nature of the characters engaging with them and did not require cuts.

When it comes to horror films, the BBFC does not intervene merely because of the possibility that these works might alarm or shock. Indeed the likely audience chooses to watch such films because they enjoy being frightened. However, the BBFC does ensure that the young and vulnerable are protected. Works featuring strong threat and menace which is sadistic or sexualised are likely to be classified at 18. At 18 horror works are also likely to contain the strongest gory images that are unacceptable at 15. Other 18 indicators may include the work being rooted in the real world, as opposed to a fantastical setting, horror that is played straight with little or no humour or irony, and the sexual terrorisation of women.

In 2011 *Cannibal Holocaust*, Ruggero Deodato's 1980 film about documentary filmmakers who go missing in the Amazon and whose footage is subsequently recovered, was submitted again for DVD classification. The BBFC had most recently considered the film in 2001, and required cuts to scenes of sexual and sexualised violence, and animal cruelty and killing. The BBFC carefully considered the film under current Guidelines and, while scenes of sexual violence remain strong, these lack the level of eroticisation or endorsement which would otherwise require intervention. The BBFC also considered further scenes of animal cruelty. Although scenes of a turtle being butchered are distasteful and difficult to view, the turtle is decapitated almost immediately and this quick kill did not require cutting

*Prostitute '18'*



under BBFC policy based on the Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937. However, a scene of clear animal cruelty, in which a small mammal is stabbed in the neck as it squeals, could not be passed uncut. With 15 seconds of this scene removed, the film was classified 18.

The US film, *Mother's Day*, sees members of a criminal family terrorising the new owners of their former family home. Strong sadistic violence and gore, including a man's hand being repeatedly smashed with a pool ball, a male hostage having boiling oil poured over his head, and a female hostage being doused in alcohol before her head is set on fire, all required the film be restricted to an adult audience.

Adam Green's *Hatchet II*, in which a woman joins a group of hunters searching swamps for the murderer of her family, frequently dwells on the infliction of injury and subsequent gory detail. It includes sight of intestines being pulled out, people being sliced vertically in half, and the back of a man's head being sanded down to expose his brain. All these moments, and further similar scenes, go beyond what can be classified at 15 and the film is consequently classified 18.

The number of explicit pornographic works submitted to the Board in 2011 decreased over the previous year to 623 works. This represents a reduction of 44% over 2010 and the second lowest figure for such submissions since 2000. The proportion of R18 works subject to cuts in 2011 (13.3%) was a reduction of 4.5% over the previous year. This relatively high proportion of works cut continues to reflect the BBFC's strict policies on material which combines sexual detail with activity which is illegal, harmful, abusive, or involves a lack of consent or the infliction of pain or injury.

Cut material in 2011 once again commonly consisted of abusive and potentially harmful activity. Most common cuts for these activities were to remove scenes of choking and gagging during deep throat fellatio and instances of breath restriction during sexual activity. Cuts were also made to underage sex references in line with research mentioned in the 2006 Annual Report. The BBFC continued to cut material in accordance with current interpretation of the Obscene Publications Acts 1959 and 1964 (OPA), which includes, but is not limited to, sexualised urination and certain types of enema play. In consultation with enforcement agencies and in order to ensure intervention is consistent with current interpretation of the legislation, the

BBFC may pass brief and isolated examples of limited sexualised urination, so long as there are no harm concerns under the Video Recordings Act 1984 (VRA) and only in certain contexts where there is no realistic prospect of successful prosecution under the OPA. Aside from OPA considerations, the BBFC does not allow at R18 penetration with objects likely to cause actual harm, or objects associated with violence. In making these decisions, the BBFC continues to draw upon expert research carried out in 2006 into violence and abuse in R18 sex works. The results of this research can be found on the BBFC's website. In 2011 such cuts included penetration with a riding crop and metal balls.

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Cut material in 2011 once again commonly consisted of abusive and potentially harmful activity  
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The BBFC classified 137 video games and associated media in 2011. Video games must be submitted to the BBFC for classification under the terms of the Video Recordings Act 1984 only when they contain certain material including gross violence, human sexual activity, or useful criminal techniques, or linear material that is video footage.

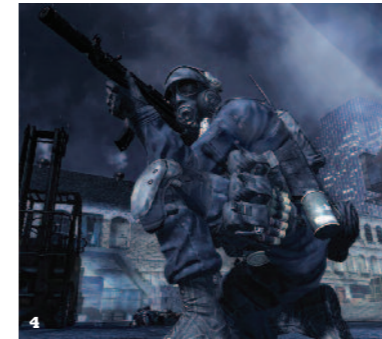
As has been the case in recent years, several critically acclaimed sequels were released in 2011 including *Uncharted 3*, *Gears Of War 3* and *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*.

Infinity Ward and Sledgehammer Games collaborated on *Call Of Duty Modern Warfare 3*, the latest in Activision's blockbuster first-person shooter series. The story continues from *Modern Warfare 2* with a team battling a gang of villains that include Russian gangster Makarov. The game contains strong bloody battle violence and the BBFC classified it 18. Featuring an array of contemporary weapons including knives, automatic rifles and grenades, the intense battles are conducted from a first-person perspective with impacts registering as bloody splashes. The game includes a level set in a fictional London in which Special Forces soldiers chase enemy Russian mercenaries through London Underground tunnels as the mercenaries attempt to escape on a train. The train, which contains no civilian passengers, crashes beneath Westminster Underground Station and the battle continues through the station up to street level. It is possible for passengers waiting on an Underground platform to be shot. But

shooting them immediately results in a check point restart. The action is firmly focussed on chasing and stopping the mercenaries and not on the indiscriminate killing of civilians.

Some comparison has been drawn between the action in the game and terrorist attacks on the London Underground in July 2005. However, the storyline is far removed from these real events, neither drawing upon nor resembling real terrorist attacks on the Underground. Nevertheless the location of the action in familiar London settings, both above and below ground, establishes a context within which the tone and impact of the work may, for some, be more unsettling, and upsetting, than in previous games in the series. The BBFC's decision to restrict the game to adults primarily reflects moments of strong violence, but also takes account of these contextual elements.

After originally being announced in the 1990s, *Duke Nukem Forever* was finally released in 2011. The game's action takes place from the first-person perspective as Duke defends the Earth from invading aliens. The BBFC classified the game 18 for strong violence, sex, nudity, language and drug references. It features frequent sight of blood during game play, with more powerful weapons having the ability to reduce enemies to bloody chunks of flesh. The strong sex includes a 'cut scene' in which it is implied, without any clear detail, that Duke is receiving oral sex from two young women. A level taking place in a strip club features sight of numerous



- 1 *Gears Of War 3* '18'
- 2 *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* '15'
- 3 *Uncharted 3* '15'
- 4 *Call Of Duty Modern Warfare 3* '18'
- 5 *L.A. Noire* '18'

topless women who walk around and dance on stage, as well as a topless woman who briefly lap dances for Duke, with the activity shown from his point of view. There is strong language throughout as well as some crude humour, such as when Duke is shown to urinate into a toilet with the player able to choose when to stop.

Set in 1940s Los Angeles, *L.A. Noire* was published by Rockstar Games. The presence of very strong language, strong violence, sex references and nudity meant that the BBFC classified the game 18. The player assumes the role of Cole Phelps, an LAPD officer who rises through the ranks of the department. The game includes very strong language, both heard and seen: for example it is visibly written on the body of a female murder victim. The game contains multiple uses of strong language, as well as some outdated discriminatory racial terms, in keeping with its 1940s setting.

While violence is not the main focus of the game, there are some strong moments. These include 'cutscenes'

showing strong bloody violence and sections of gameplay in which the player character is required to look closely at corpses and the gory detail of wounds during investigations. Strong verbal sex references occur in some storylines which deal with prostitution and paedophilia. The nudity occurs in the context of naked corpses being investigated by detectives at crime scenes, and is strong and detailed.

*The Darkness II* is a first-person shooter that features frequent strong violence and gore, very strong language and strong sex. The game is classified 18. Based on the comic, it features Jackie Estacado, a gangster who is cursed with 'The Darkness', a supernatural phenomenon that makes him part demon. The game includes very strong violence throughout and there is a focus on the infliction of bloody injury. Conventional firearms such as shotguns can result in mutilation and post-mortem damage, while Jackie also possesses a pair of fanged 'demon arms' that enable him to rip enemies to pieces. The killings often include a sadistic element,

together with very strong gory images. The game also contains frequent strong language throughout and occasional use of very strong language. One level takes place in a brothel and includes scenes of strong sex. Fellatio and sexual intercourse are implied but there is no strong detail.

The sequel to *Batman Arkham Asylum*, Rocksteady Studios' game *Batman Arkham City* takes place in a cordoned off area of Gotham City that serves as a prison, with the player primarily assuming the role of Batman. Several familiar enemies are encountered as the story progresses. It contains strong violence that goes beyond the BBFC's Guidelines at 12 and the game is classified at 15. The violence occurs as Batman dispatches various armed opponents with crunchy third person perspective punches, kicks and throws. However the game includes little in the way of blood or injury detail. The violence that Batman metes out is not sadistic in nature and he is encouraged to use stealth to achieve his objectives, rather than just violence.

Films, DVDs, or digital media which contain unlawful or potentially harmful material will, where possible, be cut. If this is not possible because, for instance, the cuts are so extensive or complex that a viable release cannot be salvaged from the remaining material, or if the distributor refuses to make the required cuts, then a work may be refused a classification altogether. In 2011 the BBFC rejected two video works.

*The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* is a sequel to a horror film passed 18 uncut by the BBFC in 2010. The sequel tells the story of a socially awkward and vulnerable man who becomes sexually obsessed with the original film and who subsequently imagines creating his own human centipede. In graphic detail we see the central character abducting, torturing, mutilating, sexually assaulting and killing his victims. We see the central character masturbating with sandpaper wrapped around his penis as he watches the original film. Once he has collected his victims we see him

cutting into knees and buttocks, removing teeth with a hammer, stapling lips to buttocks, and forcing his victims to defecate into each other's mouths. After being aroused by this last act, the central character rapes one of his victims with barbed wire wrapped around his penis. There is little attempt to portray the victims as anything other than objects to be brutalised, degraded and mutilated for the amusement of the central character, with the strong scenes of violence and sexual violence perpetrated against the victims underlining this. Under the heading 'Compulsory cuts', the BBFC Guidelines identify as of particular concern 'sexual violence or sexualised violence which endorses or eroticises the behaviour' and 'sadistic violence or torture which invites the viewer to identify with the perpetrator in a way which raises a risk of harm'. The BBFC considered whether cuts could be made to remove the elements in the film which caused most concern. However, while we did not rule out this possibility, in the view of the BBFC the cuts required

would be extensive and complex. In line with the Guidelines on rejection, *The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* was refused a classification. Subsequently, the distributor chose to make extensive cuts and submitted a version of the film which the BBFC was able to pass at 18. See page 48 for more detail.

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*The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* '18'

The second reject of 2011 was the US film *The Bunny Game*, which was submitted to the BBFC for DVD release. The film follows a prostitute as she interacts with customers and then accepts a ride from a truck driver. The driver kidnaps the woman taking her in his truck to the desert, where over the course of several days, he subjects her to a series of physical, psychological and sexual assaults in the back of the truck. The abuse of the woman takes up the majority of the film's run time and includes the woman being stripped naked and groped, being suffocated and threatened with a knife, and being branded with an iron. These lengthy sequences are intercut with scenes

portraying the assault of another unknown victim. The BBFC's Guidelines state 'A strict policy on sexual violence and rape is applied. Content which might eroticise or endorse sexual violence may require cuts at any classification level. This is more likely with video works than film because of the potential for replaying the scenes out of context. Any association of sex with non-consensual restraint, pain or humiliation may be cut'. *The Bunny Game* contains an unremitting focus on the abuse of the helpless female victims. We frequently see the victims naked as they are assaulted and the manner in which the women's bodies are presented tends to eroticise their

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## Legal Issues

The BBFC must have regard to several pieces of legislation that sometimes affect the classification of works submitted to it. The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) requires the BBFC to consider, among other things, the requirement that a filmmaker's freedom of expression is not infringed by its classification decisions. The Act permits such restrictions on that freedom of expression as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society for the protection of health and morals or the prevention of crime and disorder. If the BBFC does intervene in a work the intervention must be proportionate to the breach concerned.

Whilst no specific issues with the HRA arose in 2011, its application is something that remains at the forefront of the BBFC's thinking when classifying material.

The Video Recordings Act 1984 (VRA) is the legislation that underpins the supply and classification of age-rated audiovisual works in the United Kingdom. It is a piece of legislation that features prominently in the BBFC's deliberations.

Apart from setting out the requirement to have works classified, the VRA also requires the BBFC to pay special regard to material that could be said to cause harm to its potential audience. It goes on to provide a list of subjects which the BBFC must consider. Those subjects are: criminal, violent or horrific behaviour, illegal drugs and human sexual activity. Cuts made under the VRA are referred to throughout this Report.



The Obscene Publications Acts (OPA) of 1959 and 1964 tends to be limited to the BBFC's work with pornography. If a work is deemed to be obscene under the current interpretation of the OPA, the BBFC is required to intervene. A work will be considered obscene if it has a tendency to deprave and corrupt a significant proportion of the audience likely to see it. In 2011 a number of works required cuts to remove material that was deemed obscene under the current interpretation of the Act and this discussion is continued in the R18 section of this Report.

Under the Protection of Children Act 1978 (POCA), it is a criminal offence to exploit children by taking indecent photographs of them. POCA penalises the distribution, showing and advertisement of those items. The BBFC will refuse to classify works that contain indecent images of children (deemed to be those under 18). This can often be a difficult decision to reach, especially since the definition of the term 'indecent' is wide and

open to various interpretations. The BBFC has sought legal advice on the meaning of this term and returns to lawyers where necessary on a case by case basis. The BBFC also seeks proof of age for younger looking performers in pornographic works.

The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 introduced an offence of possessing a 'prohibited image of a child'. Under this legislation a prohibited image of a child covers non-photographic pornographic images of child abuse which must portray any of a specific range of acts. It strengthens the law on child pornography.

The Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937 prohibits the exhibition of a film if any scene within it has been 'organised or directed' in such a way as to involve the cruel infliction of pain or terror on any animal. The word 'animal' is defined as any domestic animal (tame or sufficiently tamed to serve some purpose for the use of man) or any vertebrate which is in captivity or confinement. It is the

1 *Attack the Block '15'*

2 *Drive '18'*

## Legal Issues

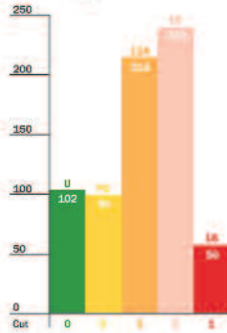
BBFC's policy to apply the Act equally to films and DVD submissions. In the video submission *The Last Rites of Ransom Pride* a scene of cockfighting, found to have been orchestrated by the filmmaker for the purposes of the film, was cut.

In the video submissions *Quiet Flows the Don*; *Shaolin*; *Army of Valhalla*; *Sword in the Moon* and *The Divine Weapon* – cuts were required to remove footage of horses made to fall by the filmmakers in a fashion that was deemed to be cruel and dangerous. The same was required of a new video submission of the Omar Sharif film *Genghis Khan*.

The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 is relevant to the BBFC's work. A key feature of this legislation is the offence of the possession of extreme pornography. Material classified by the BBFC under the VRA is excluded from the definition of extreme pornography. In order for a work to be in breach of this legislation it must be pornographic (produced solely or principally for the purpose of sexual arousal), be grossly offensive, disgusting, or otherwise of an obscene character and, in an explicit and realistic way, portray either an act which threatens a person's life; an act which results, or is likely to result, in serious injury to a person's anus, breasts or genitals; an act which involves sexual interference with a human corpse; or a person performing an act of intercourse or oral sex with an animal (whether dead or alive). Cartoon images are not caught by this Act.



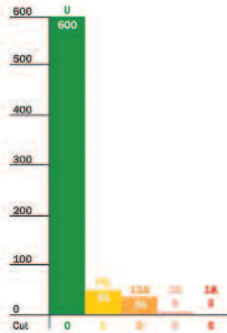
Film 710



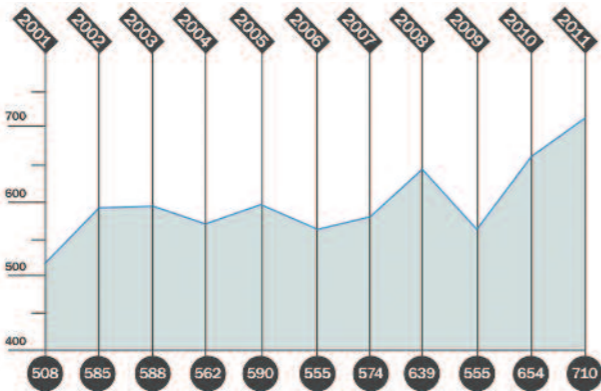
Film statistics 2001-2011

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
U	43	71	60	41	63	53	36	69	53	81	102
PG	121	143	132	102	100	92	104	117	83	110	98
12	107	48									
12A		74	153	148	153	160	159	178	143	174	215
15	177	201	186	222	218	198	222	227	226	226	239
18	60	48	56	49	55	52	53	48	50	63	56
R18			1		1						

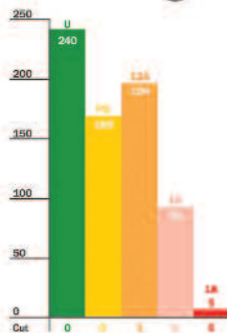
Cinema advertisements 696



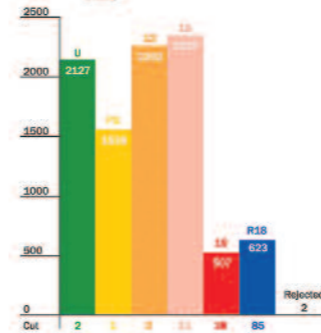
Film submissions 2001-2011



Film trailers 702



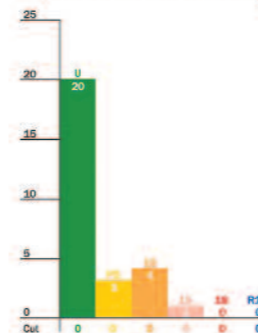
DVD 9347



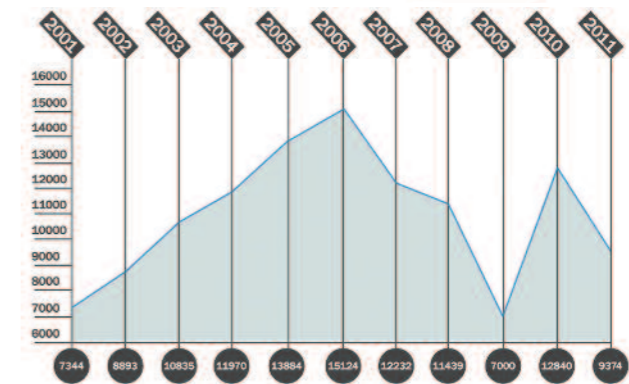
Video/DVD statistics 2001-2011

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Uc	152	121	152	126	65	66	12	15	7		
U	1473	1808	2084	2733	3106	3010	2482	1967	981	2190	2127
PG	1826	2014	2280	2684	3383	4102	2722	2609	1502	2567	1538
12	860	1157	1685	1765	2277	2807	2563	2613	1768	2963	2250
12A	1322	1721	2246	2302	2672	2890	2343	2432	1728	3204	2327
15	1059	1009	980	966	1137	1031	950	904	456	790	507
18	651	1061	1405	1392	1237	1217	1159	897	555	1125	623
Rejected	1	2	3	2	7	1	1	2	3	1	2

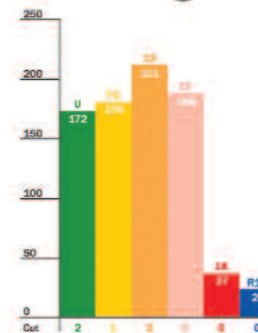
DVD advertisements 28



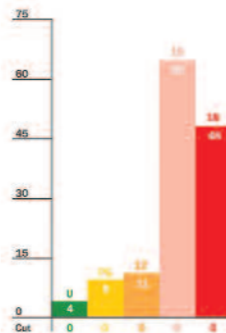
Video/DVD submissions 2001-2011



DVD trailers 810



Games & other interactive 137





## Video Appeals Committee

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During 2011 there were no appeals to the Video Appeals Committee (VAC). The VAC is an independent body constituted under Section 4(3) of the Video Recordings Act 1984 to hear appeals from submitting companies against BBC decisions they consider stricter than warranted.

The BBFC appointed seven new members to the VAC in 2011. VAC posts are advertised in the national press and the appointments were made by an independent panel chaired by Sir Anthony Hammond KCB.QC.

At the end of 2011 the full membership of the VAC was as follows:

### Video Appeals Committee Chair

**Professor Andrew Burrows QC, FBA:** *Professor of the Law of England in the University of Oxford and a Fellow of All Souls College. Barrister at Fountain Court Chambers, London and a part-time judge.*

### Members

**Athene Heynes:** *Chairman of the NHS Disciplinary Panel. Chairman of both the Disciplinary Committee and the Competency Scheme, of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. Qualified Mediator in alternative dispute resolution.*

**Judy Clements:** *Former Director of the Independent Police Complaints Commission. Now Adjudicator for HM Revenue and Customs.*

**Clare Dodgson:** *Former Chief Executive of the Legal Services Commission. Now an External Reviewer for the Parliament and Health Services Ombudsmen and Public Appointments Ambassador for the Government Equalities Office.*

**Salman Momen:** *Head of Interactive Media Group, IBM. Former Head of the Media Industry Sector at Capgemini and former Project Director of the BBC.*

**Valerie Owen OBE:** *Managing Director le Vaillant Owen. Former Managing Director of London First and Director of Jones Lang Lasalle. Non-Executive Director of the Dover Harbour Board, Church Buildings Council and East Kent Hospitals University Foundation NHS Trust.*

**Professor Samuel Stein:** *NHS Consultant Psychiatrist in Child, Adolescent and Family Psychiatry, Bedfordshire. Qualified Family Mediator.*



The Council comprises representatives from the film and video industry and local authority associations. With the retirement of several members from the Council this year, membership was opened up to include other media regulators, enforcement agencies and parenting and family groups to create a boarder, more inclusive perspective on BBFC classification decisions.

The Council viewed the action film *Drive Angry* (18) at the February meeting. The BBFC had judged the conflation of strong gory images and sexualised nudity in some scenes could not be accommodated at 15. In addition, the Council were directed to consider whether the impact of the film's 3D effects made a significant difference to the viewing experience. Council members agreed the 3D effects contributed to the 'rollercoaster' feel of the film, but added little to its level of gore or horror. There was unanimous support for the 18 classification of the film.

The next two films considered by the Council at the June and October meetings contained similar classification issues but from different perspectives: *The Hangover - Part II* and *The Inbetweeners Movie* (both 15). Both films are comedies following

the misadventures of a group of men / boys on holiday. For the former, the Council felt the level of sex referencing and language, while occasionally strong and crude, was suitable for fifteen year olds. There was some discussion about the treatment of drug misuse in the film at this certificate. However, the misuse was recognised as clearly unrealistic, and the film demonstrated the dangers of drug-taking. Critically, there was no 'glamorisation' of drug misuse and Council members therefore agreed the depiction of drugs was correctly classified at 15.

Some Council members were concerned by the attitudes expressed by some of the male characters in *The Inbetweeners Movie* towards women, especially in a film targeted at a male mid-teen audience. The Council recognised the female characters were clearly more sympathetic and stronger, while the male ones are portrayed as socially inept rather than as role models. Overall, the Council judged *The Inbetweeners Movie* did not encourage or endorse sexist behaviour. Another aspect of the film debated by the Council was its portrayal of 'binge drinking'. Nearly all the characters in the film are seen drinking excessive amounts of alcohol. The Council was conscious of

the public and media concerns raised over this issue. However, like *The Hangover - Part II*, the activity is not glamorised and many of the short-term ill effects of drinking are graphically depicted throughout the film.

The Council discussed the question of how audience expectations about certain films were taken into account when making a classification decision. As a sequel and a film based on a popular TV series, audiences brought certain expectations to each film. The Council felt both works would be much appreciated by their target audiences who would not be confounded or offended by the content, and were appropriately classified at 15. Council members agreed that neither work should be regarded as a 'family' film and recognised the 15 certificate might create different expectations amongst those unfamiliar with the titles. The BBFC's extended classification information was pointed to as a helpful tool for customers to make informed viewing choices.

Page 63  
*The Hangover - Part II*  
'15'

*The Inbetweeners*  
Movie '15'



**Membership of the Consultative Council in 2011**

**Reg Bailey**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
Chief Executive, Mothers' Union

**Mark Batey**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
Chief Executive, Film Distributors' Association

**Kim Bayley**  
*Director General, Entertainment Retailers Association*

**Lavinia Carey OBE**  
*Director General, British Video Association*

**Phil Clapp**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
Chief Executive, Cinema Exhibitors' Association

**Patrick Down**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
Law Reform Division, Scottish Government

## Consultative Council

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**Alison Edwards**  
*Local Government Association*

**Andy Foster**  
*(joined 2011)*  
*Operations Director, Trading Standards Institute*

**Laurie Hall**  
*Director General, Video Standards Council*

**Councillor Brian Goodall**  
*Convention of Scottish Local Authorities*

**Steve Jenkins**  
*Head of Films, BBC*

**Pete Johnson**  
*Chief Executive, The Authority for Television on Demand*

**Councillor Mervyn Jones**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
*Northern Ireland Local Government Association*

**Sir William Lawrence**  
*Local Government Association*

**Alison Marsden**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
*Head of Commercial & Consumer Standards and Complaints, Ofcom*

**Annie Mullins OBE**  
*Global Head of Content Standards, Vodafone*

**Councillor Goronwy Parry**  
*Welsh Local Government Association*

**Vena Raffle**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
*Head of Investigations, Advertising Standards Authority*

**Justine Roberts**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
*Chief Executive, Mumsnet*

**Natalie Rose**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
*Senior Editorial Strategy Adviser, BBC Trust*

**Paul Whiteing**  
*(joined October 2011)*  
*Chief Executive, PayphonePlus*

## Members who stepped down in 2011

**Professor Anthony Beech**

**Professor David Buckingham**

**Gery McLaughlin**  
*Justice Department, Scottish Government*

**Daniel Maher**  
*Programme Standards, Ofcom*

**Councillor Maurice Mills**  
*Northern Ireland Local Government Association*

**Professor Colin Munro**

**Detective Inspector Andy Shortland**  
*Metropolitan Police*

**Colin Webb**



The Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing (APCV) provides the BBFC with access to a wide range of skills and expertise connected with children. The views of the Panel feed into the creation of BBFC policy.

Throughout the year, Panel members shared their knowledge with the BBFC and each other through a number of round table discussions. Professor Phoenix presented research she undertook for the Bailey Review on the Commercialisation and Sexualisation of Childhood. Ms Rhodes presented recent research about the impact of pornographic material on relationships.

The APCV also considers recent borderline classification decisions and members offer their views on the impact of said works on children and young people. At the first meeting of 2011, held in March, the Panel viewed the film *Battle Los Angeles* (12A). The story involves an alien invasion of the Californian city, and the film's sustained sense of threat to a group of characters, including children, is the central classification issue. Similar 'alien invasion' films such as *Cloverfield* were classified 15. The Panel recognised that *Battle Los Angeles* is clearly targeted at young teenage boys and would be greatly enjoyed by them. Panel members compared the pace and style of the film to a video game. The violence lacks gory detail and there is a clear narrative purpose to it. APCV members argued that the film contains some moral points about loyalty and bravery, which would be especially

appealing to young teenage boys. The panel considered the sex references in the film to be too undetailed to be a problem at 12A. The Panel did express some concerns about the glamorisation of weaponry in the film, but at 12A the Guidelines are concerned with "easily accessible weapons" rather than military hardware and overall the Panel supported the 12A category.

The second film viewed by the Panel, in July, was Pedro Almodovar's *La Piel Que Habito - The Skin I Live In*. Classified 15, the film contains two scenes of sexual violence. BBFC Guidelines at 15 permit sexual violence provided it is discreet and justified by the narrative. The Panel discussed the nature of these scenes, and agreed that while the film may have little appeal to the fifteen - seventeen age group, it did raise questions of sexual identity, which were of importance and interest to those beginning to grapple with such issues in real life, and the film could be contained at 15.

**Previous Page**  
*Battle Los Angeles* '12A'  
*The Skin I Live In* '15'



## Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing

The final work under consideration in November was *Hanna*. Another 12A film, released earlier in the year, it had been subject to a number of complaints for its violence. The Panel considered the films moments of violence to be edgy and quite unsettling. However, Panel members noted that the camera cuts away at

moments of impact and there is a lack of emphasis on injuries or blood. That one character at the centre of the violence is a child was recognised by the Panel as being an issue for some viewers. However, the Panel considered the overall treatment of violence in the film was suitable for children aged 12.



1

1 *Cloverfield* '15'

2 *Hanna* '12A'



2

### Membership of the Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing in 2011

**Margo Boye-Anawomah**  
*Childcare barrister and family judge*

**John Carr OBE**  
*One of the UK's leading experts on child protection in relation to new media*

**Naomi Eisenstadt**  
*Senior Research Fellow, Oxford University Department of Education*

**Joe Godwin**  
*Director, BBC Children's*

**Charlie Lewis**  
*Professor of Family and Development Psychology at Lancaster University*

**Martyn Percy**  
*Canon of the Church of England, a theology Professor and a recent Council Member of the Advertising Standards Authority*

**Ann Phoenix**  
*Co-Director of the Thomas Coram Research Unit, and joint Head of the Department for Childhood, Families and Health, Institute of Education, University of London*

**Honor Rhodes**  
*Director of Strategic Development and Projects, Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships (TCCR). Non-Executive Director of NHS East London Cluster and a Trustee of WAVE Trust*

**Andrew Timpson**  
*Until recently Head of a successful secondary school in Wales*

**The Principal Officers of the BBFC in 2011**

*President*  
Sir Quentin Thomas, CB

*Vice Presidents*  
A. Hastings  
G. Lemos

**Council of Management**

*Chairman*  
K.G. Lee

*Vice Chairman*  
S.R. Jaggs

*Treasurer*  
J.S.P. Teckman

**Members**

S. Alleyne  
M. Carver  
J.C. Holton  
J.R. Millard  
E. Needham (Retired 30 April 2012)  
J.M. Shaw  
P.L.J. Swaffer

*Director*  
David Cooke

*Assistant Director, Policy and Public Affairs*  
David Austin

*Chief Operating Officer*  
Dave Barrett

*Head of Technology*  
Dave Harding

*Head of Finance and Personnel*  
Imtiaz Osman

*Chief Digital Officer*  
Mark Dawson

*Press and Public Relations Officer*  
Catherine Anderson

**Principal activities**

The company, which is limited by guarantee, is responsible for the classification of cinema films and, in accordance with the terms of the Video Recordings Act 1984, for the classification of video works. Its revenue is derived principally from fees charged to distributors for the classification of their product.

**Business review**

Income from DVD submissions declined by a further 2% but this was partially offset by new streams of income from new procedures and initiatives resulting in an overall reduction of 1% in fee income. Whilst the rate of decline has slowed, it is nonetheless expected to continue. In addition, agreement has been reached with customers for new concessions to be applied to identical DVD works which have previously been classified for theatrical release and 2D cinema works that have previously been classified in 3D format. It is anticipated that fee income will decline further in 2012. The Board will continue to monitor levels of submission and assess resource requirements.

**Directors**

The Directors of the company are the Members of the Council of Management together with the President and the Secretary.

**Statement of Directors' responsibilities**

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Report of the Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**Corporate Governance**

The Directors continue to give careful consideration to, and have adopted the main principles of, corporate governance as set out in the Code of Best Practice of the Committee of the Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance (the Cadbury Report). However it is the opinion of the Directors that not all the provisions of the Cadbury Report are appropriate for a company of the size and structure of the British Board of Film Classification.

**Financial instruments**

The company's financial instruments at the balance sheet date comprised bank loans, investments, cash and liquid resources. The company has various other financial instruments such as trade debtors and trade creditors that arise directly from its operations.

It is, and has been throughout the period under review, the company's policy that no trading in financial instruments shall be undertaken.

**Interest rate risk**

The company has no interest rate exposure as all the long term debt is at a fixed rate.

**Liquidity risk**

The company had significant net cash balances as at the balance sheet date.

**Foreign currency risk**

The company's risk to foreign exchange transactions does not arise as all the company's financial instruments are denominated in Sterling.

**Financial assets**

The company has no financial assets other than investments, short-term debtors and cash at bank.

**Borrowing facilities**

As at 31 December 2011, the company had undrawn committed borrowing facilities of £536,000 (2010 - £536,000).

**Environment, Health and Safety**

The company is committed to managing its activities so as to provide the highest level of protection to the environment and to safeguard the health and safety of its employees, customers and the community.

The company's Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) policies provide the guiding principles that ensure high standards are achieved and afford a means of promoting continuous improvement based on careful risk assessment and comprehensive EHS management systems. These policies are reviewed at regular intervals.

**Transfers to reserves**

The retained profit for the year of £9,957 has been transferred to reserves.

**Fixed assets**

Information relating to changes in the tangible fixed assets is given in note 8 to the financial statements.

**Donations**

During the year the company made charitable donations totalling £54,000 (2010 - £50,000).

**Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors**

So far as the directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each director has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

**By order of the Board**

**D.A.L. Cooke**  
*Secretary*

3 Soho Square,  
London, W1D 3HD.

21 March 2012

We have audited the financial statements of British Board of Film Classification for the year ended 31 December 2011 on pages 77 to 87. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in a Report of the Auditors and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Respective responsibilities of Directors and auditors**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors Responsibilities set out on page two, the Directors are

responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

**Scope of the audit of the financial statements**

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Directors; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the financial statements to identify material

**Independent Auditors' Report to the Members  
of the British Board of Film Classification**

inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If we become aware of any apparent misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

**Opinion on financial statements**

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 December 2011 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

**Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion the information given in the Report of the Directors for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

**P. J. Barton (Senior Statutory Auditor)**  
for and on behalf of Wilkins Kennedy  
Statutory Auditors and Chartered  
Accountants

Bridge House  
London, SE1 9QR

Date: 21 March 2012

**Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December 2011**

	Note	2011	2010
<b>Turnover</b>	(2)	<b>5,862,651</b>	5,907,771
Operating costs		<b>(5,742,855)</b>	(5,550,529)
		<b>119,796</b>	357,242
Other operating income		<b>3,732</b>	-
<b>Operating surplus</b>	(6)	<b>123,528</b>	357,242
Interest receivable and similar income	(3)	<b>99,833</b>	107,318
Interest payable and similar charges	(4)	<b>(95,236)</b>	(106,535)
<b>Surplus/(deficit) on current asset investments:</b>			
- realised		<b>93,159</b>	30,221
- (increase)/decrease in provision for unrealised losses		<b>(189,272)</b>	111,047
<b>Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation</b>		<b>32,012</b>	499,293
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	(7)	<b>(22,055)</b>	(71,223)
<b>Retained surplus for year</b>	(14)	<b>9,957</b>	428,070
Retained surplus at beginning of year		<b>8,691,680</b>	8,263,610
<b>Retained surplus at end of year</b>		<b>£8,701,637</b>	£8,691,680

**Continuing operations**

None of the company's activities were acquired or discontinued during the above two financial years.

**Total recognised surpluses and deficits**

The company has no recognised surpluses or deficits other than the surplus or deficit for the above two financial years.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.



**Balance sheet 31st December 2011** Company No: 00117289

	Note	2011	2010
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	(8)	5,162,243	5,639,385
<b>Current assets</b>			
Deferred tax asset - due after more than one year	(9)	152,599	95,517
Debtors	(10)	545,169	691,406
Investments	(11)	3,595,564	1,913,863
Cash at bank and in hand		2,209,950	3,391,172
		<b>6,503,282</b>	6,091,958
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	(12)	(1,573,531)	(1,433,397)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>4,929,751</b>	4,658,561
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>10,091,994</b>	10,297,946
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due after more than one year	(13)	(1,390,357)	(1,606,266)
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>£8,701,637</b>	£8,691,680
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Income and expenditure account		8,701,637	8,691,680
<b>Accumulated funds</b>	(14)	<b>£8,701,637</b>	£8,691,680

Approved by the Board of Directors on 21 March 2012  
 K.G. Lee - Chairman  
 J.S.P. Teckman - Treasurer

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**Cashflow Statement for the year ended 31st December 2011**

Reconciliation of operating surplus to net cash flow from operating activities	Note	2011	2010
Operating surplus		123,528	357,242
Depreciation charges		533,589	543,587
(Surplus) on sale of tangible fixed assets		-	(894)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors		157,027	(188,444)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors		184,873	(606)
<b>Net cash inflow from operating activities</b>		<b>£999,017</b>	£710,885
<b>Cash flow statement</b>		<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
Net cash inflow from operating activities		999,017	710,885
Return on investments and servicing of finance	(15a)	(6,193)	(24,823)
Taxation		(135,279)	26,583
Capital expenditure	(15b)	(56,447)	(31,181)
Management of liquid resources	(15c)	(1,777,814)	146,845
<b>(Decrease)/increase in cash</b>		<b>£(976,716)</b>	£828,309
<b>Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in liquid funds</b>	(15d)	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
(Decrease)/increase in cash in the year		(976,716)	828,309
Increase/(decrease) in current asset investments		1,681,701	(5,577)
Change in net liquid funds		704,985	822,732
Net liquid funds at beginning of year		3,494,005	2,671,273
Net liquid funds at end of year		<b>£4,198,990</b>	£3,494,005

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011**

**1. Accounting policies**

The principal accounting policies, which have been consistently applied, are:-

**(a) Basis of accounting**

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

**(b) Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are stated at original cost. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write-off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset on a straight line basis over its estimated useful life as follows:-

Moveable furniture and equipment	25% per annum
Computer equipment	33.33% per annum

Long leasehold property is amortised on a straight line basis over the duration of the lease.

Expenditure on leasehold property and immovable furniture and equipment is fully depreciated in the year of acquisition.

**(c) Current asset investments**

Current asset investments are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

**(d) Taxation**

The charge for taxation is based on the surplus for the year and takes into account taxation deferred because of timing differences between the treatment of certain items for accounting and taxation purposes.

Provision is made at current rates for tax deferred in respect of all material timing differences. Deferred tax assets are only recognised to the extent that they are regarded as recoverable. The company has not adopted a policy of discounting deferred tax assets and liabilities.

**(e) Turnover**

Turnover comprises the value (excluding VAT) of services supplied in the normal course of business.

**(f) Leased assets**

Rentals applicable to operating leases are recognised in the income and expenditure account as incurred.

**(g) Pensions**

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme to provide retirement benefits for its staff. The amount charged to income and expenditure account in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable and provided in the year.

**2. Turnover**

The turnover and operating surplus are attributable to the principal activity of the company. The entire turnover in both periods is attributable to geographical areas within the United Kingdom.

**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011**

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>3. Interest receivable and similar income</b>		
Bank deposit interest	<b>24,776</b>	42,362
Income from current asset investments	<b>75,057</b>	64,956
	<b>£99,833</b>	£107,318
<b>4. Interest payable and similar charges</b>		
Interest on loan repayable after more than 5 years	<b>£95,236</b>	£106,535
<b>5. Employees</b>		
Average monthly number of people employed by the company during the year:-		
Non-executive directors	<b>9</b>	10
Presidential team	<b>3</b>	3
Management	<b>5</b>	5
Administration	<b>11</b>	9
Examination	<b>22</b>	22
Technical	<b>23</b>	26
	<b>73</b>	75
<b>Costs in respect of these employees including directors:</b>		
Salaries	<b>3,035,822</b>	3,141,860
Social security costs	<b>333,377</b>	303,162
Pensions	<b>313,649</b>	210,350
Life assurances	<b>7,494</b>	7,037
	<b>£3,690,342</b>	£3,662,409
<b>Directors' remuneration</b>		
The remuneration of the directors during the year was:-		
Emoluments	<b>292,848</b>	294,868
Pension contributions in respect of 2 (2010 - 2) directors	<b>40,920</b>	38,024
	<b>£333,768</b>	£332,892
<b>Highest paid director</b>		
The above amount for remuneration includes the following in respect of the highest paid director	<b>£198,230</b>	£194,830

**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011**

6. Operating surplus	2011	2010
	£	£
The operating surplus is stated after charging:		
Directors' remuneration (including benefits)	333,768	332,892
Depreciation and amounts written off fixed assets	533,589	543,587
Rental of equipment	31,215	29,957
Auditors' remuneration:		
- audit	23,000	22,000
- non audit	15,911	8,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
7. Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	2011	2010
<b>Reconciliation of tax charge to surplus:</b>		
Surplus on ordinary activities multiplied by standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 26% (2010 - 28%)	(8,323)	(139,802)
<b>Effects of:</b>		
Expenses not deductible for tax purposes	(9,075)	(1,727)
Realised investment surplus covered by capital losses	24,221	8,462
Unrealised investment surplus not taxable	(49,211)	31,093
Depreciation in excess of capital allowances	(65,943)	(64,819)
Franked investment income not taxable	14,535	15,989
Marginal relief	14,349	14,036
Other adjustments	(1,653)	(474)
Adjustment in respect of prior year	1,963	2,286
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Deferred tax arising from the interaction of depreciation and capital allowances	(79,137)	(134,956)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Tax on surplus on ordinary activities</b>	<b>£(22,055)</b>	<b>£(71,223)</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011**

8. Tangible fixed assets				
	Long leasehold property	Long leasehold property expenditure	Furniture and equipment	Total
<b>Cost</b>				
At beginning of year	5,180,700	94,154	3,603,973	8,878,827
Additions	-	-	56,447	56,447
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At end of year	5,180,700	94,154	3,660,420	8,935,274
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
At beginning of year	317,751	94,154	2,827,537	3,239,442
Charge for the year	41,444	-	492,145	533,589
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At end of year	359,195	94,154	3,319,682	3,773,031
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net book value</b>				
At end of year	£4,821,505	£-	£340,738	£5,162,243
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At beginning of year	£4,862,949	£-	£776,436	£5,639,385
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
9. Deferred tax asset			2011	2010
At beginning of year			95,517	31,784
Credit to income and expenditure account arising from the interaction of depreciation and capital allowances			57,082	63,733
			<hr/>	<hr/>
At end of year			£152,599	£95,517
			<hr/>	<hr/>

A deferred tax asset arising on realised capital deficits carried forward of £83,000 (2010 - £116,000) has not been recognised as the directors are uncertain that sufficient suitable capital surpluses will exist in the future. Should such surpluses arise, the asset will be recovered.

**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011**

<b>10. Debtors</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
Trade debtors	<b>332,694</b>	265,852
Other debtors	<b>55,369</b>	270,571
Prepayments and accrued income	<b>157,106</b>	154,983
	<u><b>£545,169</b></u>	<u>£691,406</u>
<b>11. Current asset investments – listed in UK</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At beginning of year	<b>1,951,509</b>	2,068,133
Additions	<b>2,387,537</b>	863,103
Disposals	<b>(516,564)</b>	(979,727)
	<u><b>3,822,482</b></u>	<u>1,951,509</u>
<b>Provision for unrealised deficit</b>		
At beginning of year	<b>(37,646)</b>	(148,693)
(Increase)/decrease in provision	<b>(189,272)</b>	111,047
	<u><b>(226,918)</b></u>	<u>(37,646)</u>
<b>Cost less provision at end of year</b>	<u><b>£3,595,564</b></u>	<u>£1,913,863</u>
<b>Market value of listed investments at end of year</b>	<u><b>£4,151,265</b></u>	<u>£2,584,059</u>
<b>12. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
Bank loan (secured - see note 13)	<b>216,167</b>	204,764
Trade creditors	<b>337,317</b>	219,632
Corporation tax	<b>81,100</b>	137,242
Value added tax	<b>200,939</b>	164,611
Other taxation and social security costs	<b>163,563</b>	155,081
Other creditors	<b>451,654</b>	422,322
Accruals and deferred income	<b>122,791</b>	129,745
	<u><b>£1,573,531</b></u>	<u>£1,433,397</u>

**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011**

<b>13. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
Bank loan (secured)	<b>£1,390,357</b>	£1,606,266
	<u><b>219,236</b></u>	<u>215,048</u>
Due within 1 – 2 years	<b>219,236</b>	215,048
Due within 2 – 5 years	<b>730,480</b>	726,727
Due after more than 5 years	<b>440,641</b>	664,491
	<u><b>£1,390,357</b></u>	<u>£1,606,266</u>
<p>The bank loan, which is secured by a fixed legal charge over the long leasehold property, bears an annual fixed rate of interest of 5.64% and is repayable in quarterly instalments. The final instalment is due for payment on 6th May 2018.</p>		
<b>14. Reconciliation of movements on accumulated funds</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
Surplus for the financial year after taxation	<b>9,957</b>	428,070
Accumulated funds at beginning of year	<b>8,691,680</b>	8,263,610
	<u><b>£8,701,637</b></u>	<u>£8,691,680</u>
<b>Accumulated funds at end of year</b>	<u><b>£8,701,637</b></u>	<u>£8,691,680</u>

**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011**

15. Cash flow statement	2011	2010		
<b>(a) Return on investments and servicing of finance</b>				
Interest received	13,986	16,756		
Income from current asset investments	75,057	64,956		
Interest paid	(95,236)	(106,535)		
	<u>£(6,193)</u>	<u>£(24,823)</u>		
<b>(b) Capital expenditure</b>				
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	(56,447)	(32,075)		
Receipt from sale of tangible fixed assets	-	894		
	<u>£(56,447)</u>	<u>£(31,181)</u>		
<b>(c) Management of liquid resources</b>				
Purchase of current asset investments	(2,387,537)	(863,103)		
Sale proceeds of current asset investments	609,723	1,009,948		
	<u>£(1,777,814)</u>	<u>£146,845</u>		
<b>(d) Analysis of change in net funds</b>				
	<b>At beginning of year</b>	<b>Cash flows</b>	<b>Other non-cash changes</b>	<b>At end of year</b>
Cash at bank and in hand	3,391,172	(1,181,222)	-	2,209,950
Bank loan repayable within one year	(204,764)	(11,403)	-	(216,167)
Bank loan repayable after more than one year	(1,606,266)	215,909	-	(1,390,357)
Current asset investments	1,913,863	1,777,814	(96,113)	3,595,564
	<u>£3,494,005</u>	<u>£801,098</u>	<u>£(96,113)</u>	<u>£4,198,990</u>

**Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011**

**16. Guarantees and other financial commitments**

**Pension arrangements**

(i) The company operates a defined contribution scheme to provide retirement benefits for staff.

(ii) The total pension charge for the year was £313,649 (2010 - £210,350).

**Operating lease commitments**

The following operating lease payments are committed to be paid within one year:

	2011 Property	2011 Equipment	2010 Property	2010 Equipment
Expiring: Within one year	-	26,065	-	-
Between one and five years	35,759	9,664	27,812	22,084
After more than five years	37,500	-	37,500	-
	<u>£73,259</u>	<u>£35,729</u>	<u>£65,312</u>	<u>£22,084</u>

**17. Company status**

The company is limited by guarantee and is under the control of its members. The liability of the members is limited to £1 each, in the event of the company being wound up.

**18. Related Party Transactions**

During the year Goodman Derrick LLP, a firm of solicitors in which P.L.J. Swaffer is a consultant, charged £114,316 (2010 - £72,908) for professional services at normal commercial rates.



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