

To The Committee Secretary,

I am currently a 37 year old mother with a 7 1/2 month old daughter. I am not conservative. I have experienced many things in my life, and been fortunate enough to travel many areas of the world. I recognise that we are extremely fortunate to live in Australia. As a resident of Australia, a mother, and as an educated human being, I write to you with my grave concerns of how children are sexualised in the media. Not only from a mothers, but as a human being respectful of others, I do believe that how children are sexualised in the media has a major impact of negative influences and negative consequences that affect our children.

I understand there is a common belief in marketing that 'sex sells'. With the influence and wide broadcasting nature of technology, there is so much sexualised media that is accessible to and sadly sometimes aimed towards children, and even towards the adult segment. From a child's perspective, they are generally too young to digest these images appropriately, and why should they have to? How do these images benefit children? Are there any positive things that come out of sexualising children? I believe it is called consumerism, and profit, and unfortunately relates directly to the making of 'money'. The child's interests are forgotten and there is no benefit for the child. Why should we sell our children out to consumerism? Should common sense not prevail with our children having the best opportunities and information available to them? The child is disadvantaged by the sexualised images portrayed, and how can anyone say to the contrary. What example could be given of this being advantageous to the child? I cannot think of one, and I would find it hard to believe anyone else could find any benefits for the child.

On reflection, particularly on the music videos I use to watch on a regular basis as a child - my memory from 8yrs old and upwards - how confused, bemused, and at times disgusted by the portrayal of women as 'sexual beings' in dance videos. School friends and pupils were overwhelmed by these visual images and sometimes took on some of their persona or image. Today, the video clips are dramatically more sexualised and perhaps may be classified as soft pornography. As a new parent I fear that my daughter may be influenced by this and an already existing peer pressure ever increasing with more complex adult notions. There may also be negative implications for the influence it may have on young boys perspectives on how to treat or be respectful of the opposite sex or questioning their own masculinity or behaviour, not to mention the possibility of giving an open forum to paedophiles. As a liberal minded adult I am disgusted by some of the international music videos, and media disseminated. How does a child know how to interpret this sexualised information if an adult is struggling to understand its relevance to the subject matter at hand? I am always questioning - why is it necessary? It makes no sense.

Formal measures must be taken to stop this sexualisation of innocent children. Please let them be children. Please give our country the opportunity of remaining a great country and the ability to prosper with healthy and respecting individuals - children growing up to have respect for not only themselves but for others. We need to do something now before it is too late.

Kind regards,
Karen Trojan