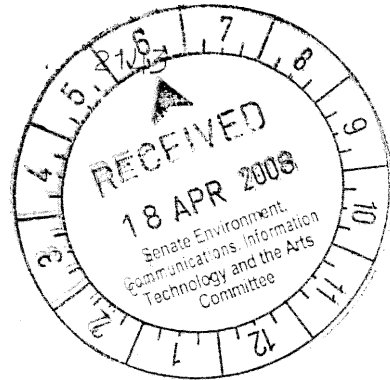


April 16, 2008

Secretary,  
Senate Standing Committee on Environment,  
Communications and the Arts,  
P.O. Box 6100,  
Parliament House,  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Sir or Madam,

Premature sexualisation of children in the  
contemporary media environment

To my mind, it is tragic that phenomenal learning tools such as the computer and internet have been captured by clever but evil people who aspire to make their fortunes from bending the minds of young people. The natural curiosity of youth can be excited by computer games, which may appear innocent good fun, but which I believe incite violence and premature sexualisation of children and a loss of time as simply being and behaving like a child. Too much violent adult behaviour is available for children to see, even if it is not happening within their own families.

I believe that TV news should be more strictly monitored to remove images of violence or sexualisation until at least 9pm when children should be in bed asleep - e.g. skimpy fashions on parade, same-sex marriages, misconduct of any sort. It would be great to see instead how young people have achieved good results in their sport, studies and community activities rather than reporting all the bad things that happened during the day.

I think that paedophiles have been encouraged to act out their fantasies by the way designers are creating suggestive outfits for children to make them appear older and just seem to want to outdo each other with the most outrageous designs. TV ads, peer pressure and children's glossy magazines must be lining the pockets of the publishers by parents who can't or don't know how to say NO to their children, and then put the cost on the credit card.

Parents should be the arbiters of their children's viewing, reading and listening, and where this happens the results should be good. However, it seems that many children have access to their own TVs, radios and computers and may not be monitored and blocked from distasteful programs. I don't know how Channels 9 and 10 ever obtained or kept their licence in the first place - I don't watch - only TV2. But I do hear what rubbish is posted on internet and emails etc. and wonder how young people will cope when there is a power blackout and all their batteries have gone flat. R rating is already too high.

I thank God for the lovely children and young people at my church and in my own family who have been brought up to practise humility, caring for others and love for God and His beautiful world, but I fear for children who are in the ever-present and escalating danger of manipulation by adults who are greedy in so many facets of life.

Please use your powers to curb this greed, for our children's sake.

Yours sincerely, *Raema J. Walker* (Mrs) R. Walker, OAM