



ABC TV South Australia

M—adult themes, consumer advice, warnings

Complaint

On 3 March 2000 the ABA received a complaint that the program 'Gilbert and George', broadcast by ABC TV on 22 December 1999 depicted scenes of animal cruelty which were inappropriate for broadcast.

Relevant code of practice

The ABC Television Code of Practice provides:

6 Warnings

Where appropriate, the audience will be given advance notice of programs or program segments which some viewers or listeners could find distressing or disturbing.

7 Television Program Classifications

This system of television program classification applies the Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Videotapes issued by the Office of Film and Literature Classification.

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7.4 Consumer Advice

Audio and visual consumer advice on the reasons for an M or MA classification will be given prior to the commencement of an M or MA program.

Office of Film and Literature Classification Guidelines

These guidelines provide information relating to the M classification:

Films classified M contain material that is considered to be potentially harmful or disturbing to those under 15 years. Depictions and references to classifiable elements may contain detail. However, the impact will not be so strong as to require restriction.

Adult Themes: Most themes can be dealt with, but the treatment should be discreet, and the impact should not be high.

Decision

The ABA determined that ABC TV, in its broadcast of the program 'Gilbert and George' on 22 December 1999, breached code 7 of the ABC Code of Practice by broadcasting scenes of animal cruelty that were in excess of the OFLC's M classification for adult themes; and breached code 7.4 and code 6 of the ABC Code by not providing either the correct audio and visual consumer advice or a warning.

Action taken

The ABC has improved procedures relating to consumer advice and warnings, including providing more 'user-friendly' information which is tailored to suit each program.

The ABA is satisfied with the action taken and no further action is required at this time.

