

PRESS RELEASE

FILM CENSOR'S 2006 ANNUAL REPORT PUBLISHED

The results of two new research studies commissioned by IFCO (the Irish Film Censor's Office) are included in the Film Censor's 2006 annual report, which is published today (Wednesday 30th May).

A survey into attitudes to strong language in films shows that parents and their teenage children agree in making a clear distinction between 'bad language' as used in the common vernacular and 'abusive language' that relates to race, colour or sexual gender. The research, carried out for IFCO by Lansdowne Market Research, found that teenagers believe strong language is acceptable in certain contexts, such as stress or humour, but is unacceptable when used in an aggressive context, such as racist abuse.

In a further report, the UK-based film and media consultant, Dr. Jim Barratt, who was commissioned to examine how IFCO might respond to the challenges it will face in an internet and digital era, warns that 'national classification systems could be sidelined by new digital technologies that are unconstrained by national borders or jurisdictions'.

In his letter to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform which prefaces his annual report the Film Censor, Mr. John Kelleher, noted: "I believe it is timely that IFCO should review and proactively seek to meet the challenges to film and DVD/video classification posed by new technological developments and business models."

Speaking today on publication of his report, Mr. Kelleher added:

"IFCO has moved from the old style of censorship to freedom of choice for adults and age-related classification for young persons – from yesterday's stop sign to today's signpost. All our research shows that parents and the public rely on IFCO's ratings and welcome the detailed consumer advice our website provides. So, with the digital age upon us, there's a real opportunity now for the government to underpin and consolidate IFCO as a consumer advisory agency – a valued 'trustmark' for Irish parents".

Among other key developments in 2006 noted in the report are:

- More than 10,000 cinema films and DVD/videos were certified during the year.
- There was a significant increase in the number of non-mainstream or 'arthouse' films submitted for certification.
- The number of visitors to the IFCO website was up 16% on the previous year.

The Film Censor's 2006 Annual Report can be viewed/downloaded at the News section of the IFCO website www.ifco.ie

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