



## CLASSIFICATION REVIEW BOARD

**30 October 2002**

**23-33 MARY STREET  
SURRY HILLS, NSW**

**MEMBERS:** Mr Jonathan O’Dea (Deputy Convenor)  
Ms Kathryn Smith  
Ms Jan Taylor

**APPLICANT:** Roadshow Entertainment

**BUSINESS:** To review the decision of the Classification Board to assign the classification "PG" under the Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 to the videotape *Great Moments in Science* with the consumer advice "Low level violence".

### **DECISION AND REASONS FOR DECISION**

#### **1. Decision**

The Classification Review Board (the Board) decided to set aside the decision of the Classification Board to classify the videotape *Great Moments in Science* ‘PG’, and to assign the classification ‘G’.

#### **2. Legislative provisions**

The Classification (Publications, Film and Computer Games) Act 1995 (the Act) governs the classification of films and the review of classification decisions. The Act provides that films be classified in accordance with the National Classification Code (the Code) and the classification guidelines (the Guidelines).

Relevantly, section 11 of the Classification Act requires that the matters to be taken into account in making a decision on the classification of a film (or videotape) include:

- (a) the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults;
- (b) the literary, artistic or educational merit (if any) of the film;
- (c) the general character of the film, including whether it is of a medical, legal or scientific character; and
- (d) the persons or class of persons to or amongst whom it is published or is intended or likely to be published.

### **3. Procedure**

Three members of the Board viewed the video at the Board's meeting on 30 October 2002.

The Board received written application for review and a supporting written and verbal submission on behalf of the Applicant from Ms Kendall Murphy of ABC Enterprises.

The Board then met in camera to consider the matter.

### **4. Matters taken into account**

In reaching its decision the Board had regard to the following:

- (i) The applicant's Application for Review (including oral and written submissions).
- (ii) The relevant provisions in the Act.
- (iii) The videotape *Great Moments in Science*.
- (iv) The relevant provisions in the *National Classification Code* as amended in accordance with Section 6 of the Act.
- (v) The *Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Videotapes* determined under Section 12 of the Act.

### **5. Findings on material questions of fact**

The videotape is educational in nature, combining live action and animation. The presenter, Dr Karl Kruzelnicki, mixes science, history and light comedy in covering a range of topics, including the 'up yours' two finger salute; the nature of moving and falling objects - like arrows, toast and cats; gravity and space; and the true origins and meaning of Murphy's law.

The Review Board found that the videotape did contain discreet and mild violence. There were three scenes that were particularly examined in terms of violence, appearing at 8, 10 & 12 minutes.

At 8 minutes, a cartoon caveman clubs another caveman over the head. At 12 minutes a cartoon depiction involves an injured archer with two fingers missing, followed by another soldier placing a bandaid over the wounded area of the finger stumps. The Review Board found that these scenes were very light in tone, appeared in a comedic setting and were educational in context.

The Review Board focussed mainly on one scene at 10 minutes running for just over 20 seconds. It shows soldiers fighting in the historical Battle of Agincourt. There is fighting in a sepia-tinted live action sequence, which includes an arrow striking a man. The arrow passes through the man's body cleanly and quickly, without unwarranted emphasis or detail. It is not gratuitous, with the focus on the arrow's movement and workings, and is presented in a scientific and educational fashion.

The scene has a light tone, a historical context, constant educational commentary over the visuals and surrounding humour. The overall very low level sense of threat or menace is further assisted by the lack of any colour or blood in the scene, as well as a cartoon character appearing at the beginning and end of the battle scene.

The affected characters are not introduced to viewers and are not presented in a readily identifiable situation, thus preventing any real possibility of emotional attachment from viewers.

## **6. Reasons for the decision**

The Review Board based its decision to set aside the decision of the Classification Board, and to assign the classification "G" to the videotape *Great Moments in Science* on the content of the film as set out in 5. above.

The Review Board found that the depiction of the sequence at 10 minutes was careful and discreet and that it would not be harmful, disturbing, confusing or upsetting to children.

The Review Board also considered the two other cartoon scenes at 8 & 12 minutes that involved a very low level of violence. Like the scene at 10 minutes, the Review Board did not believe that these scenes required adult guidance for children to view.

The applicant emphasised the video's educational merit in their appeal. In considering considerations under section 11 of the Classification Act, the Review Board found that there was substantial educational merit that reduced any potential impact of the scenes in question. Further, the scientific character of the whole video also worked in the Applicant's favour.

## **7. Summary**

The Classification Review Board found that the video warranted a G classification as it contained material that was suitable for all viewers. The Review Board therefore decided to classify the film *Great Moments in Science* 'G'.