



OFFICE OF FILM  
& LITERATURE  
CLASSIFICATION

*Te Tari Whakarōpū Tukuata, Tuhituhinga*

## Playboy The Mansion Introduction

The game Playboy: The Mansion was submitted to the Office of Film and Literature Classification on 20 January 2005, by the Film and Video Labelling Body for Monaco Corporation. Monaco is the distributor of the game in Australasia.

Monaco sent detailed information about the game, some of which is reproduced on these pages. In particular, they supplied a great deal of information about the portrayals of nudity and sex, knowing that this was likely to cause the most concern.

The game was examined early in February. Examining a game involves the Office's specialist game player playing through as much of the game as he can in 4-5 hours while the classification officer responsible for classifying it sits and watches. Normally, the opening scenes of the game will be viewed and played, along with selections from higher levels. This gives an idea of the game play, the time likely to be taken by a player and the impact of the game play. The distributor is required to supply cheat codes, videos and instructions so that the Office can skip through the game.

The classification officer wrote up the game, and his decision is part of this case study (the Summary of Reasons for Decision). In his consideration sheet he notes that "Much of the gameplay is drawn out and seems rather far-fetched and silly. This is reinforced by the low quality CGI (computer generated

*Life, for Hugh, is good. Too bad it's just not very fun. ... True, Playboy: The Mansion bombards you with a wide array of digital boobies, but sex in-game holds the same appeal as clipping your toenails.*

*Review at [ps2.ign.com/articles/581/581815p1.html](http://ps2.ign.com/articles/581/581815p1.html)*

### *Key notes on Playboy: The Mansion*

- *Sex in the game is always simulated and is "inferred sex" rather than actual sex*
  - *Sex is always consensual between both parties*
  - *Drunken characters can never have sex*
  - *There is no violence in the game*
  - *There are characters within the game (NPC's) that cannot have sex*
  - *There is no genital nudity*
  - *You DO NOT need to have sex with a character to complete the game*
  - *You CANNOT command 2 other people to have sex*
- Letter from Monaco Corporation, publishers and distributors of Playboy: The Mansion*

images) and the cartoonish appearance of the characters and settings". You can see some of these images on the next page.

The Office classified the game R16, with the note "Contains sex scenes".

Early in March the Secretary of the Society for the Promotion of Community Standards had written to the Warehouse, Noel Leeming and DSE to try and stop these companies selling the game. On 28 April 2005 he applied to the Secretary for Internal Affairs for a review of the game. After consideration, the Secretary for Internal Affairs allowed the review to proceed.

The President of the Film and Literature Board of Review called for submissions on the game, and the Society, the Office and Monaco Corporation all made submissions. The Board visited the Office on 9 June 2005 in order to watch the game being played (this is the first game to have gone to review, and the Board has no gaming facilities of its own).

The Board classified the game R16, changing the note to "Contains sexual themes".



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## Questions

1. What matters under section 3(1) of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 are noted in the original decision of the Office?
2. What matters under section 3(3) of the Act are noted in the original decision of the Office?
3. What matters under the Act are discussed in the Board of Review's decision?
4. Do you think the change of descriptive note makes a difference?
5. There were three submissions summarised in the Board's decision. Who argued for what, and why?

The three submissions to the Board each discussed the sex in the game.

### Monaco

“If all the player did was have “sex” or attempt to initiate “sex”, he would not get very far at all – not even past mission 1. The player has a lot of stuff to do in between getting content and publishing his magazine, so eventually, the time spent pursuing “sex” would result in a negative bank balance and game over.

### The Office of Film and Literature Classification

“As the “sex” takes up a relatively small part of the gameplay, is time-consuming to achieve and is presented with low-quality CGI, it is difficult to see how the game injures the public good by inuring players to, or encouraging them to take pleasure from, promiscuity”.

### The Society for the Promotion of Community Standards

“The likelihood of injury arises from a young person's lengthy and repeated exposure to the game's unhealthy promiscuous lifestyle promotion and from the gameplay constantly encouraging the player to escalate the levels of sexual promiscuity through a reward system involving pornography. While it is acknowledged the game involves fictional characters and settings, its ‘entertainment’ value lies in allowing the player to enact and repeat regular acts of sexual promiscuity without conveying any warning about the serious health risks involved.”

6. What do these three extracts tell you about the stakeholders involved? What emphasis has each placed on the sexual elements of the game?
7. The makers of the game describe it as a “business sim”. Do you think it would be possible to make a Playboy business sim without involving sexual themes, nudity or sex? Or do you think the makers of the game are trying to play up the non-sexual elements of the game to make it more respectable?

