

WHAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE MOTION PICTURE CODE AND RATINGS

The motion picture industry announces a voluntary film rating system which will guide the public in their selection of movies. Under this system certain films will be restricted for children. This reflects a special concern for young people, as well as a serious effort to be of direct help to *parents* in the fulfillment of their responsibilities.

The Motion Picture Association of America, the National Association of Theatre Owners and the International Film Importers and Distributors of America fully endorse and are cooperating with this plan.

Here are the Rating Symbols . . .

easily recognized . . . with their meanings:

- (G)** Suggested for *GENERAL* audiences.
- (M)** Suggested for *MATURE* audiences (parental discretion advised).
- (R)** *RESTRICTED* — Persons under 16 not admitted, unless accompanied by parent or adult guardian.
- (X)** *Persons under 16 not admitted.* This age restriction may be higher in certain areas. Check theater or advertising.

And, here are the answers to expected questions, explaining how these symbols serve today's movie-goer in the U.S.A.

These ratings apply to films released after November 1, 1968.

I. EXACTLY WHAT DO THESE RATINGS MEAN?

All ratings given by the Code and Rating Administration represent the considered opinions of a competent and experienced staff with broad and lengthy backgrounds in film appraisal.

The film rating symbols indicate the following:

- (G)** Suggested for *GENERAL* audiences. These movies are considered to be suitable for patrons of all ages.
- (M)** Suggested for *MATURE* audiences (parental discretion advised).

Films rated **(M)** are considered to be suitable for *adults* and *mature young people*. Each parent should obtain information regarding the content of **(M)** films, and then guide members of his own family according to each one's maturity, experience, stability and special interests. No one understands each child's capacities and needs better than a parent!

- (R)** *RESTRICTED* — *Persons under 16 not admitted*, unless accompanied by parent or adult guardian.

Again, the parent must decide whether the young members of his family should patronize

a film which deals with an adult subject in an adult way. This too requires that he obtain information regarding the content of the film, and then determine whether or not it is one to which he wishes to *take* his child or children. By attending **(R)** films together, parents and young people can discuss them together.

(X) *Persons under 16 not admitted.*

A rating of **(X)** on a film indicates that because of the subject matter or treatment of the subject matter, persons under 16 will not be admitted. This rating will be enforced at the box office of each theater. (In certain areas this age restriction may be higher.) Film companies that do not choose to voluntarily submit a film for rating by the Code and Rating Administration self-apply an **(X)** rating to that film.

2. HOW CAN ONE FIND OUT WHAT RATING A FILM HAS BEEN GIVEN?

The quickest and easiest way to locate the rating of a movie is to look in the movie advertisement in your local newspaper. Or, you can obtain this information by phoning the theater box office. These symbols can also be noted in previews of coming attractions, in the box office window, and on posters in theater lobbies.

3. IF PARENTS WISH TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CONTENT OF MOVIES SO AS TO MAKE WISE DECISIONS FOR THEIR OWN CHILDREN, WHERE CAN THEY FIND THIS INFORMATION?

Movie advertising is only one of many sources which describe the nature of a movie. With a little effort, parents can easily locate film commentary in newspapers (reviews by film critics and in movie columns); in certain family magazines which discuss motion pictures (including the PTA Magazine and "Parents' Magazine"); in the free monthly film information service provided by the Film Board of National Organizations (FILM REPORTS), made available through movie theaters, public libraries and many daily newspapers; in the ratings of the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures posted in all Roman Catholic churches and printed in most Catholic Diocesan newspapers; in the reviews in other religious magazines; and in the information on movies which appears in most popular magazines.

Or . . . phone the theater and inquire. Theater personnel can provide the descriptive information contained in FILM REPORTS.

4. WHY WAS 16 CHOSEN AS THE BASIC AGE FOR RATINGS R AND X?

There are a number of reasons why 16 is the best of several alternatives as the age at which ratings apply. Though chronological age is only one of many measures of maturity, the vast majority of educators and parents agree that today's young people have, by age 16, an abundance of factual information and an understanding of life previously considered possible only at an older age. Most states require school attendance only up to age 16; most states grant work permits at age 16. In most states drivers' licenses are granted at age 16. One of the oldest film classification systems is British which uses age 16 for similar categories. All of these factors and others were considered carefully in making this decision.

5. WHO WILL ENFORCE THE RATINGS (R) AND(X)?

The ratings are enforced, voluntarily, by the manager in each motion picture theater.

6. HOW CAN THE PUBLIC BENEFIT MOST FROM THIS SYSTEM OF FILM RATINGS?

Because the *public* is ultimately responsible for the success or failure of this system, here are some tips:

- a. *Learn* to identify the rating symbols and what they mean.
- b. *Learn* the sources of film content information, and *use* them.
- c. *Help* your children to understand what the symbols mean and why they are important. (Parents are ultimately responsible for their own children's movie-going practices.)
- d. *Urge* the young members of your family to *respect* the ratings in their movie selections, making it unnecessary for a theater manager to turn them away at the box office.
- e. *Urge* the editors of your local newspapers to publish the symbols and their meanings along with movie advertisements. (The Motion Picture Association of America has provided every daily and weekly newspaper in the country with this information.)
- f. *Support* in your theaters the types of films you say you want, and you will thereby encourage the production of more of them.

7. DOES THIS NEW VOLUNTARY FILM RATING SYSTEM MEAN THAT THE MOTION PICTURE CODE OF SELF-REGULATION NO LONGER FUNCTIONS?

Not at all. In fact, most movie-goers see films which carry the Code Seal. The Seal indicates that the film has been submitted voluntarily by the producer or distributor to the Code and Rating Administration, and that it has complied with all requirements set forth in the Code Standards for Production, Advertising and Titles. Pictures rated **(G)**, **(M)** or **(R)** may carry the Code Seal, if the producer or distributor so desires. Pictures rated **(X)** do not receive the Seal.

8. WHAT ARE THE "STANDARDS FOR PRODUCTION"?

The Standards for Production are a set of principles based on standards common to most communities in the U.S.A. These standards serve as guidelines by which to measure the acceptability of films for American audiences. Although the standards are stated in broad terms, they are applied thoughtfully to each film.

9. DOES A CODE SEAL OR RATING INDICATE THE QUALITY OF A MOVIE?

No. It is not the responsibility of the Code and Rating Administration to judge the artistic, aesthetic, or entertainment quality of a movie. Their responsibilities are limited to judging whether or not films meet the requirements of the Standards for Production, and to applying film ratings.

10. CAN MOVIES BE DISTRIBUTED AND EXHIBITED IN THE USA . . .

. . . *without a Code Seal?* Yes, this is a voluntary system. But, the great majority of movie-goers view films which have been granted a Code Seal.

. . . *without a film rating?* Yes. However, it is estimated that well over 95% of the films exhibited in this country, both domestic and foreign, will now carry a rating, applied either by the Code and Rating Administration, or a self-applied rating of **(X)**.

11. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT THE FILM INDUSTRY VOLUNTARILY PROVIDE FILM RATINGS FOR MOTION PICTURES, AND ALSO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE a PRODUCTION CODE?

It is vital in a democracy that the media regulate themselves and assume responsibility for informing the public. The only alternative would be to abandon this responsibility to government, a practice most thoughtful citizens would oppose. The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States is a guarantee that freedom of speech and artistic expression be protected.

12. WILL EVERYONE AGREE WITH THE RATINGS GIVEN BY THE CODE AND RATING ADMINISTRATION?

No, of course not. There will be times when some patrons will disagree with these judgments. This is to be expected. In the USA we enjoy a society with many opinions so peoples' responses will vary. Just as there are varying cultural, religious and political views, so will there be diverse personal opinions about movie ratings.

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AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION NEWS RELEASES

The Book Catalogs Committee of the Resources and Technical Services Division of the American Library Association is compiling a directory of on-going book catalogs. Libraries who presently have book catalogs are asked to send their name and address as well as the name of the person responsible for the book catalog to Paula Kieffer, Coordinator, Technical Services, Baltimore County Public Library, 25 West Chesapeake Avenue, Towson, Maryland 21204

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Three appointments in the Library Technology Program of the American Library Association have been announced by Forrest F. Carhart, Jr., LTP Director. Herbert L. Hanna, former Editorial Assistant of the Library Technology Program, is now Technical Editor. Robert J. Shaw has been named Editor of *Library Technology Reports*, succeeding William Cole, who resigned to accept a position as head of Readers Services at the St. Louis University Library. Mrs. Nancy Knight succeeds Mr. Shaw as Technical Information Specialist.

The LTP, which was founded May 1, 1959 as the Library Technology Project has four principal objectives: