



Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995
CLASSIFICATION BOARD

DETAILS OF THE PUBLICATION:

FILE No L06/256
Processing Date: 12/12/06

Title: THE PEACEFUL PILL HANDBOOK
Version: ORIGINAL
Format: Paperback book
Duration: 216 PAGE(S)
Publisher: EXIT INTERNATIONAL US
Author: PHILLIP NITSCHKE/ FIONA STEWART
Production Co: NOT SHOWN
Country Of Origin: USA
Language: ENGLISH
Application Type: Publication 153-252 pages
Applicant: EXIT INTERNATIONAL

PROCEDURE:

The Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995, the National Classification Code and the Classification Guidelines approved by the standing Committee of Attorneys-General, are followed when classifying films.

Item Viewed: YES **Viewing Date:** 12/12/06
Written submissions: NO **Oral submissions:** NO

MATERIAL CONSIDERED:

In classifying this item regard was had to the following:

- (i) The Application YES
- (ii) A written synopsis of the item NO
- (iii) The Item YES
- (iv) Other NO

DECISION

(1) Classification: Category 1 Restricted

(2) Consumer Advice:

(3) Condition:

(4) Key:

(5) Ratified By: _____
(Senior Classifier)

SYNOPSIS:

The publication "The Peaceful Pill Handbook" by Dr Philip Nitschke and Dr Fiona Stewart is said by the authors to be the result of work in Assisted Suicide and Voluntary Euthanasia and provides information on issues in relation to End of Life (EOL) decision making.

ARTICLE TYPE: BOOK

FRONT COVER: Suitable for public display

REAR COVER: Suitable for public display

CONTENTS: See synopsis below

REASONS FOR THE DECISION:

When making decisions the Classification Board (the Board) follows the procedures set out in the Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 (the Act). The Board also applies the National Classification Code and the Classification Guidelines, while taking into account the matters set out in Section 11 of the Act. The Board notes that it sought legal advice in relation to this decision.

MAJORITY OPINION

In the majority view of the Board this publication warrants a Category 1 restricted classification as, in accordance with Item 3 (c) of the Publications Table of the National Classification Code, it is unsuitable for a minor to see or read. In considering the National Classification Code the Board notes the principle 1 (a) that adults should be able to read, hear and see what they want.

Based on the Guidelines for the Classification of Publications, the publication warrants legal restriction to adults and may offend some sections of the adult community. Material classified Category 1 – Restricted must be distributed in a sealed wrapper.

The book states that it is intended for seriously ill and suffering people for whom there is little hope that their quality of life will ever recover to a level that is satisfactory to them. It also states that such people have every right to make carefully considered and fully informed decisions about their own life, and death.

The publication contains discussions of EOL considerations and the issue of suicide in EOL decisions. It also discusses suicide methods and contains a survey of the relative advantages and shortcomings of suicide in EOL decisions. The publication also describes a project undertaken by a group of elderly people who held a common belief in Euthanasia to make their own barbiturate or a similar chemical compound; it discusses places in the world where euthanasia or assisted suicide is legal; and it discusses issues relating to the immediate post-death period.

In the view of the Board the publication has a serious intent to explore adult themes of EOL and associated issues such as euthanasia and suicide. Moreover, the treatment of these themes is not exploitative and the publication is aimed at a specific audience.

In considering the legal advice provided, it is the majority view of the Board that the book does not contain information that promotes, incites or instructs in matters of crime and for this reason does not warrant refusal of classification. However, the majority is of the view that the themes explored throughout the text require a level of maturity that necessitates the publication being restricted to adults.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION:

MINORITY OPINION 1

In a minority view of the Board this publication warrants an 'RC' classification in accordance with Item 1 (c) of the Publications Table of the National Classification Code.

"1. Publications that:
(c) promote, incite or instruct in matters of crime or violence" ...will be Refused Classification.

In this view, the legal advice taken with regard to Item 1 (c) requires a refusal of classification in that this publication instructs in matters of crime; that is, in the manufacture of barbiturates .

In this view, this publication also warrants an 'RC' classification in accordance with Item 1 (a) of the Publications Table of the National Classification Code.

"1. Publications that:
(a) describe, depict, express or otherwise deal with matters of sex, drug misuse or addiction, crime, cruelty, violence or revolting or abhorrent phenomena in such a way that they offend against the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by a reasonable adults to the extent they should not be classified" ... will be Refused Classification.

In this view, the publication requires a refusal of classification with regard to Item 1 (a) in that the treatment of the criminal offense referred to above would offend reasonable adults in the manner set out in 1 (a).

MINORITY OPINION 2

In a minority view of the Board this publication warrants an 'RC' classification in accordance with Item 1 (c) of the Publications Table of the National Classification Code.

In this view, the legal advice taken with regard to Item 1 (c) requires a refusal of classification in that this publication instructs in matters of crime; that is, in the manufacture of barbiturates and in the removal of evidence of suicide.

In this view, this publication also warrants an 'RC' classification in accordance with Item 1 (a) of the Publications Table of the National Classification Code.

In this view, the publication requires a refusal of classification with regard to Item 1 (a) in that the treatment of the criminal offenses referred to above would offend reasonable adults in the manner set out in 1 (a).

MINORITY OPINION 3

In a minority view of the Board this publication warrants an 'RC' classification in accordance with Item 1 (c) of the Publications Table of the National Classification Code.

In this view, the passages describing the manufacture of barbiturates fall within the scope of Item 1 (c) in that they instruct in matters that are criminal offenses.

DECISION

In the Board's view this publication is appropriately located within the Category 1 restricted classification.