

# Record, video rating doesn't go far enough

Last Christmas, Joe Ordinary bought his six-year-old niece Buffy Ordinary a new Sesame Street record album called, "Heavy Metal Muppets".

When he returned home at Easter he was shocked to see sweet little Buffy in torn and dirty jeans and a rock concert t-shirt, wearing three bandanas, 22 crosses and 36 pounds of chains.

**Chris McCubbin**

Buffy's mother tearfully relates to Joe the sordid story of the preceding three months. It seems that since Christmas Buffy's life had been a whirlwind of dissipation, involving sex, drugs, streetfights and culminating in Buffy's being initiated into a satanist cult.

The reason for this tragedy? It seems that Joe's innocent gift to little Buffy, unbeknownst to him, contained por-

nographic rock lyrics. Now Buffy is trashed for life and might as well be put out of her misery.

"Oh, woe!" moans poor Joe O. "If I'd only known!"

Well now, friends and neighbors, Joe can know.

That's right. If a group known as the Parents Music Resource Center gets its way, rock albums will have to carry warning labels on the album jacket if they contain the kind of trash that's likely to turn Our Little Darlings into booze-guzzlin', pot-smokin', dirty, hairy, smelly, commie, prevert punks!

The PMRC's rating system is very specific. Rock songs with dirty lyrics will get an X rating. Those with violent content will get a V, occult songs will get an O, and songs dealing with drugs and alcohol get a D/A.

And that's not all. The PMRC wants to label videos as well. The warnings would appear in the corner of the

screen and stay there for the entire video.

This system will work fine when mom is around. I can see some problems if the kids are alone. (Johnny to his little sister: "I'm gonna go read a comic book. Let me know if a X or V comes on.")

My one reservation with the PMRC's system is that it *doesn't go far enough*. It's great for the kids, but what about us grown ups?

I propose three more categories. If a song is likely to insult the intelligence

of an average adult, give it an I. If the video is boring, give it a B. And if it's cliché, please, please, let us know in advance with a C.

Think of it. You're sitting at home watching MTV when a C appears on the screen. You decide you don't care to watch somebody wrecking cars or tipping over tables, so you go get a soda. When you get back a B is on the screen. You prefer not to watch a mid-aged head singing a ballad in black and white, so you turn off the TV. When you get your nerve up to turn it back on, you see B, C, I and you smash the tube before

Lionel Richie can get on the screen.

Of course, the most hard-hit bunch under my system will be the heavy metal boys. Since about 93 percent of heavy metal videos qualify for all nine classifications (B, C, D/A, I, O, V, X), the average Ratt video is going to come out looking like an Alpha-Bits cereal commercial. In fact, there probably will be so many letters on most heavy metal videos that you won't even be able to see the band.

And that, my fellow Americans, is the *best* reason I know for rating videos.

## 'Blue Turtles' is Sting at his best

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"We Work The Black Seam" is an overly earnest song against nuclear power and for miner's rights. It's followed by "Consider Me Gone," a pop tune that would be the album's most forgettable cut if it wasn't for "The

Dream of the Blue Turtles," a short and unnecessary instrumental.

Things pick up with "Moon Over Bourbon Street," another fine, goofy song. It could be called "Vampire's Blues." The arrangement on this song is interesting. It varies from a slow New Orleans blues on the verse to a kind of spooky minute on the chorus. This is a

fun song.

The album closes with "Fortress Around My Heart," the album's second (and better) single release.

This is a surprising and different album. It should appeal to everyone from jazz buffs to Pink Floyd fans. Try it, by all means.

GPA 3.7

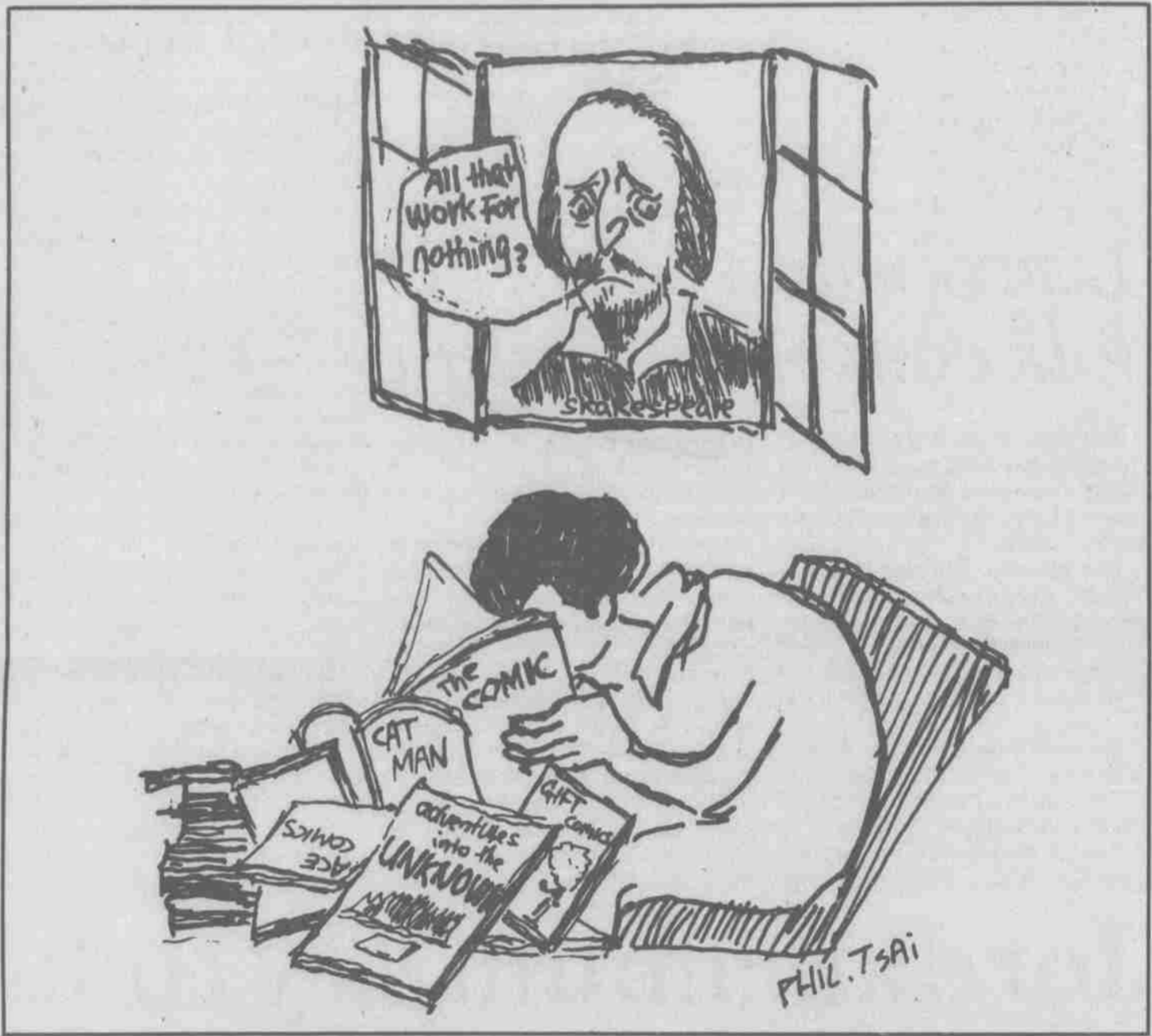
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By Troy Phipps

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