

## Censorship: You Can't Keep a Good Moralist Down

Written by Fuse Magazine | Fuse Magazine  
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**Censorship has always been a contentious subject and if you think it's ever going to go away then you're living in fairyland (which from all accounts isn't that bad, but we aren't talking about that kind of fairyland).**

There always seems to be somebody who thinks they know a better way for 'us' to live. And the tools used to disseminate this mantra are often hidden beneath the call for family values or religious morals... as if we don't actually have any.

The Federal Government's proposed internet 'clean feed' courtesy of Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Stephen Conroy, seems to have finally been flushed down the toilet where it belongs. But it's important to remember that sometimes that half flush does not work so well and things have a habit of floating back up to the surface.

If you stop and think about this 'clean feed' for a moment, as far as it affects the Gay and Lesbian (GLBTQI) community at large, it's really quite insidious. In an effort to get mainstream Australian families on board, the Government says that the filter's main aim is to censor material that is 'harmful and inappropriate' for children. But is it really all about the little children or is that just propaganda because what the filter would really do is far more reaching than you may think. Mandatory across-the-board internet censorship for every internet connection, with no opt-out facility, would mean we would join countries like China, Saudi Arabia and Iran and let me tell you, these are not good holiday destinations for anyone with different sexual orientations from the norm... Look I can use fear as a tool too!

'Inappropriate content'— It's a very broad term. Sounds awfully flexible to me and who decides

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on what that is anyway — Stephen Conroy, Steve Fielding, Nic Xenophon, the Greens? God knows? Or does she? Remember the bad old days when the Catholic Bishop's man in the Senate, Brian Harradine had balance of power? He basically ordered up the censorship regime in the Senate to any government who needed his vote on other issues. Obviously you can say goodbye to any 'adult content' online if Harradine's successor, Senator Fielding has the final say.

Peer-2-Peer and online dating sites such as Gaydar, Gay/Lesbian Matchmaker and others would all be blocked. Coming out... well not on the internet anymore. Many queer websites dealing with this and with sexual health issues would most be blocked and the list just goes on. Heaven forbid you type any word that contains 'sex'.

...Which brings me back to the moralists. In politics, individuals are always looking for something to further their own agenda. We all do it. Unfortunately some people's so called 'good intentions' are not what they seem. A 'clean feed' disguised under the banner of 'save the little children' is really just another tool used by hard line religious and moralist groups to censor the internet for content that they believe is not suitable — and let me tell you, that includes ANYTHING gay.

'Clean feed' may all seem dead in the water but let's not let our guard down yet (or ever). The Rudd government could still use regulation rather than legislation to censor gay and lesbian content on line. As long as there are governments and politicians there will be duplicitous agendas and our rights to sexual freedom and choice will always be under threat.

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