

February 13, 2021

To whom it may concern,

In response to the proposed changes to the Online Safety Bill, I'm concerned about the modernised online content scheme, classifying harmful online content.

How will harmful online content be determined? What is the measure to show something is harmful, or not, and is there an appeal process if labelled 'harmful?'

As a Sexual Wellness Facilitator and a Sexual Activist, I value the ability to connect, share information and resources online, including services, events, groups and education. To be a healthy society, we need to embrace and manage all elements of humanity, growing with changes as they present.

With respect to safety, harm reduction and creating a kinder world, we need to also ensure safety of participation in practices where no harm is done to others.

Moving to Australia I was shocked at the conservative views on sexuality, orientations and lifestyles that influence laws, regulations and societal judgement. These views create rather than discourage opportunity for devicency, the more we accept and normalize something, the more easily it can be managed.

As a 'reasonable adult', I enjoy content that other 'reasonable adults' may not, this doesn't make my choices immoral and certainly not harmful. What I do in the privacy of my home with my loved ones, is my choice and my responsibility. The broad and vague aspect of proposed monitored content runs the risk of censorship and forcing expressions of sexuality even further into the shadows. I work hard professionally and privately to foster sexual wellness including health, harm reduction and access to professionals. I believe this is the only way to dismantle and destroy rape culture and the centuries-long trauma and destruction viewing sex as dirty and/or shameful has created. To function as an evolved, healthy society we need to manage sexual activity (including online content) without shame nor judgement and encourage best practices.

I hope that this proposed Bill focuses on the potential harm vs. actual content in regards to determining 'harmful content'. Education and access are essential in creating safety and wellness. Judging content is subjective. With clear, reasonable, consistent regulations, I believe we can design both freedom and safety into policies by adhering to the purpose, not the practice.

In sexual wellness,
Amanda Sinclair