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without missing a hair on the Constitution.

As for the anxious parents, the ratings offer a relief from having to police everything that hits town—and a relief for us from getting those letters saying, “Why didn’t you tell us it was dirty?” Of course you may think that anxious parents should be abolished, but that’s another question. For myself, I am not sorry to have missed, let’s say, outright stag movies. (And don’t think I wouldn’t have gone, good home or lousy home; there was such a thing as saving face with my fellow louts.) So gamy an introduction to sex might take a while to get over. And while we are still some little distance from stag movies, the ice is broken with flagellation, transvestism and other surprises for the bourgeois child.

So much for theory. But then one finds an “R” rating given to Ingmar Bergman’s *Shame*, and theory totters on its three-legged throne. If a few

seconds of female bosom are enough to slap an “R” on a serious film, the under-sixteens may soon find themselves restricted to *The Flying Nun*. There won’t be enough serious movies for them to learn anything from. And the next generation of filmgoers will wind up with tinier fore-

heads than those that have gone before. Already the price of movies is geared to keep the kids at home—or away from the large screen. The ratings could complete the rout.

Beyond that, we have had enough breast fetishism in this country without adding some arbitrary unveiling date. If that is what the anxious parents are after, they should be locked in their rooms. And if the Code and Rating Administration of the Motion Picture Association of America has been set up to placate the body-haters, it will be serving something worse than a wave of repression; it will be contributing to that dreary state of decadence in which half the populace gets too much sex and the other half gets too little, and there is no sharing of moral experience and sensibility between the two. ‡‡

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The new movie ratings provide a rueful case of getting what you want and then finding that you don’t especially want it. Theoretically, pornographers and anxious parents might once have made common cause on this question. Barney Rosset (I know, he isn’t really a pornographer because he doesn’t believe there is any such thing—but if there was such a thing, that’s what he would be) has expressed mild satisfaction over the system, because it might keep the Carrie Nations of sex in their cages a bit longer. Anyone who thinks we have seen the last wave of repression in this country underestimates the power of judges to reverse themselves, when the fit is on them,