

# MPAA boss Glickman says goodbye to Hollywood

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Dan Glickman, the outgoing chairman of the Motion Picture Association of America, poses for a portrait in Las Vegas on Monday, March 15, 2010. (AP Photo/Matt Sayles)

(AP) -- Dan Glickman spent his Hollywood years aiming to improve the ratings system that tells Americans what to expect in a movie - and fighting pirates.

Glickman, the outgoing chairman of the Motion Picture Association of America, inherited a tough job from longtime predecessor Jack Valenti to defend Hollywood against counterfeiters distributing illegal copies of movies, first on videotape and DVD, now on the Internet.

For studios, "the protection of their content is the No. 1 issue. Without question, it's piracy," Glickman said in an interview at ShoWest, a convention for theater owners, as he prepares to take a new job April 1 as head of Refugees International.

"But it's broader than just piracy. It's how to protect content in this digital world, particularly on the Internet. The Internet is ubiquitous. Kids can access it. It's all available in their homes, and they feel it's theirs. Our job has been to try to educate people that in fact it's not theirs, unless there's some form or system for paying for it. At the same time, it's our responsibility to provide it in ways that are easily accessible and at reasonable prices."

As Internet speeds increase to the point where huge movie files can be downloaded easily, Hollywood has scrambled to avoid the sort of free sharing of songs that bulldozed the [music industry](#).

As the key studio lobbyist in Washington, D.C., Glickman has been the point man on movie piracy since taking over the MPAA job in 2004 from Valenti, who had overseen the association for 38 years and implemented the ratings system that has been in place since the late 1960s. Valenti died in 2007.

While piracy has been the main financial threat facing studios, Glickman recalled a word of advice from Valenti about the job's most important aspect.

"I remember Jack talked to me about this, and he was right. When I took this job, he said, 'the preservation of the ratings system is as key as anything else you'll do. You've got to make sure it's on the level, serves the public, and it's fair and transparent,'" Glickman said.

As during Valenti's tenure, the ratings system continued to draw

criticism under Glickman, detractors saying it was too puritanical about sex and overly permissive about violence. The system judges movies by content, assigning them ratings of G, PG, PG-13, R or NC-17 to help parents determine what films might be appropriate for children to see.

Kirby Dick's 2006 documentary "This Film Is Not Yet Rated" took the MPAA to task on sex and violence and also said the ratings system was stacked in favor of deep-pocketed studio films and against independent filmmakers whose movies might get slapped with restrictive NC-17 ratings arbitrarily. The film also characterized the ratings system as secretive and lacking consistent standards.

"The criticism that came from that movie, some of it was legitimate, some of it wasn't. We've done some things to try to improve the openness of the system, particularly on how we relate to independent film. We've really opened the doors to that movement and been much more, I think, constructive in the dialogue between them and the MPAA on their ratings and advertising issues," Glickman said.

"I'm really big on the importance of documentary movies, because I think they can have an impact, and I think that movie had some impact on us, quite truthfully."

Glickman, 65, is a former congressman and served as U.S. agriculture secretary under President Bill Clinton. As president of Refugees International, Glickman will oversee the nonprofit group's efforts to provide humanitarian aid for people displaced by crises around the world.

A successor has not yet been chosen at MPAA, but Glickman's new job will be a big change from his Hollywood gig, which took him to such swanky events as the Cannes Film Festival and the Academy Awards.

"I wouldn't say I got addicted to it, but I would say it was a hell of a lot of fun," Glickman said. "I thought to myself, boy, my parents wouldn't believe this. This kid from Kansas - my dad was in the scrap-iron business - and here I'm walking down the red carpet, and I'm commenting on issues like what's the best movie or who's a talented actor or actress."

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