

## WRITTEN REASONS FOR DECISION SECTION 12

TITLE OF PUBLICATION: The Hills Have Eyes

OFLC REF:600576

### HEADNOTE

<b>Type of Publication:</b>	Film 35mm
<b>Title of Publication:</b>	The Hills Have Eyes
<b>Other known title:</b>	Not Stated
<b>OFLC Publication Reference No:</b>	600576
<b>Decision:</b>	Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years.
<b>Display Conditions:</b>	Nil.
<b>Descriptive Note:</b>	Contains graphic violence and sexual violence.

The publication entitled *The Hills Have Eyes* is classified objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years. This classification is because of the manner in which the publication deals with matters of horror, cruelty and violence, including sexual violence.

The publication is a 35mm American film, loosely based on the 1970s cult horror film of the same title. The feature has a running time of just over an hour and forty-eight minutes. The plot centres on a family who are tricked into taking a shortcut through the New Mexico desert while driving to California. Their vehicle is sabotaged and they are terrorised by a gang of mutant humans. The disfigured people are descended from miners and their families who hid in the mines despite being ordered to evacuate when the government decided to test nuclear bombs there. Most of the travelling family are killed or subjected to gruesome indignities but the survivors fight back and manage to kill some of the mutants. The final images of the feature imply that the survivors are being watched by another villainous character. The opening credits play over old footage of nuclear bombs and photographs of disfigured babies and children. The lead characters use offensive language throughout the feature. Tension is built up during the feature by dramatic orchestral music and sound effects including loud breathing and eerie voices.

The film's treatment of the 1970s subject matter is fairly typical of contemporary horror films. The manner in which most of the mutant characters are presented is similar to characters like Jason and Freddy Krueger in other film franchises. They first appear in fleeting glimpses and as shadows, but when they are seen they become typical "bogeyman" figures.

The mutants' monstrous natures are often revealed by the gruesome ways that they invade and subvert typical family values. Two family pets are eaten by the mutants, and in another disturbing scene one (adult) mutant suckles at the breast of a nursing mother. The mutants also take advantage of family loyalty to further torment the family members. At one stage they set up a diversion by setting fire to the father, drawing the attention of most of the family, and then attack the isolated Brenda.

Most of the feature is blood-drenched, and all of the violence is depicted in detail. A severed ear in a takeaway food container is seen in close-up several times. There are flashes of images of bones and flesh at one point, and a character named Doug is locked in a freezer with body parts and blood.

There is a brief reference to crime in the form of illegal drug use. A teenage girl character named Brenda jokes to her sister about how she wants some "chronic". Brenda's sister explains to their mother that "chronic" is marijuana.

The feature contains many depictions of violence, including sexual violence, and cruelty. The plot is based around the threat of, and execution of, violence. The violence includes stabbings, beatings, shootings and immolations. The sexual violence is dealt with below under s3(3)(a)(ii). The strongest, and most typical depictions of violence are discussed more fully under s3(3)(a)(i).

The publication does not contain any matters that require discussion under s3(2) of the FVPC Act.

Section 3(3)(a)(i) of the FVPC Act relates to the extent and degree to which, and the manner in which, the publication describes, depicts or otherwise deals with the infliction of serious physical harm. Acts of violence are treated in a variety of ways throughout the feature. The most common violent act is the stabbing of a character with an axe. The mutants appear to be extremely strong, and often after they stab a person they then lift the body by lifting the axe. Typically during these sequences the victim's face is not seen, as the camera focuses on the movement of the axe.

The feature opens with a sequence of around two minutes which depicts people in biohazard suits being stabbed and their corpses being dragged behind a vehicle, to which they are attached with chains. There is a long stretch of scene-setting after the credits, in which there is no violence but suspense is built up. About forty-two minutes into the feature an unsympathetic character shoots himself in the head with a shotgun. The viewer sees the shooting, and there is a brief glimpse of the remains of the man's head. A character named Bob is then lured into a car, and the camera stays outside the vehicle as an unknown assailant repeatedly pummels Bob's head against the car windows. Bob is later shown chained to an object and set on fire. His anguished face and his bellowing leave a disturbing impression.

Other characters are shot, and though their wounds are realistic, they are not focussed upon. A character named Doug lives through many attacks by the mutants. They repeatedly chase him

with axes, and at one point, chop some of his fingers off. One mutant bashes Doug's head against the ground several times.

Doug is driven to commit violence as well and the circumstances invite the viewer to applaud his actions. He stabs various mutants, including impaling one through the neck with the pole of an American flag and then sinking an axe into the top of his head. Later he repeatedly bashes another mutant in the face with the end of a shotgun before shooting him.

The presentation of sexual violence within the feature is disturbing and deliberately shocking. The scene including sexual violence is fast-moving and has several focuses, so the viewer is at times unsure of what is taking place. Two male mutants enter the family caravan, having distracted most of the family. Brenda is asleep in bed and one mutant touches her face and then puts his hand over her mouth when she wakes up. The scene cuts away and then cuts back to one of the mutants moving his pelvis while lying on top of Brenda. The other mutant pulls him off, and it quickly becomes clear that he was not raping Brenda, as his trousers are still done up. The second mutant then attacks Brenda, who screams and struggles as he pulls her nightdress up and undoes his trousers. The focus then switches to other characters, but Brenda's anguished screaming can be heard in the back ground for most of the rest of the scene. When she is finally discovered by members of her family she is virtually catatonic, and the blood on her legs strongly suggests that she has been raped.

One of the mutants also sexually attacks Brenda's older sister Lynn, who was earlier depicted breastfeeding her baby. During the same long scene in which Brenda is raped, one of the mutants points a gun at Lynn's baby. He then undoes Lynn's dress, revealing her bra, and his head sinks below the line of the camera, but it is clear that he is suckling at her breast. Lynn looks extremely uncomfortable and distressed during the relatively brief sequence.

The treatment of sexually violence in the feature is strong, and this effect is largely created by the focus upon the women's reactions. The sexual violence in the feature is the most obviously "bad taste" element and it is likely to evoke reactions from viewers.

The dominant effect of the publication as a whole is of a gruesome but rather one-dimensional contemporary American horror film. The unrestricted availability of the publication is likely to be injurious to the public good due to its treatment of matters of horror, cruelty and violence, particularly sexual violence. The distressing images of sexual violence and the strong treatment of violence are likely to adversely affect teenagers and children. Adults are considered more likely to be able to put the images and themes of the film into context. Therefore the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years.

***Written reasons are not legally required for section 12 submissions, but it is the policy of the Classification Office to provide them.***

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Date	600576 22/03/06	OFFICER Ref	600576
Applicant	FVL B		
Applicant to Labelling Body	Twentieth Century Fox Films Ltd		
Title (On Screen)	The Hills Have Eyes		
Other Known Title	Not stated		
Director/s	Alexandre Aja		
Producer/s	Wes Craven, Peter Locke, Marianne Maddalena		
System Format	Film 35mm	Country of Origin	USA
Language/s	<del>English</del>		

Classification	Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years.		
Descriptive Note	Contains graphic violence and sexual violence.		
Excision/s	N/A	Date Cleared	N/A
Total Running Time	108.02	Total Running Time after Excisions	N/A

0.10 Fox Searchlight Pictures

0.30 text abt U.S atomic nuke tests

0.47 New Mexico Desert  
loud ominous arch. of fish in river

1.20 ♂s in biohazard suits, geiger counters duty.

1.55 bloody ♂, axe in head, back pickaxe  
flings body

2.21 bodies dragged on chain beh ute

2.36 old footage of ♀ 1950s

2.53 title. Aaron Stanford Kathleen O'Connell,  
Vanessa Shaw. Ct W song, news footage  
nuke blasts

- 3.51 images of mutatin, disfigs.
- 4.50 Desert, wind, outside shack, car, letterboxes  
menacing id.
- 5.42 ♂ comes out w. gun. "Ruby is that ya?"
- 6.36 fence → "No Trespassing U.S. Dept of Energy"
- 7.03 ♂ lks down steps → hole in ground Hear  
breathing "Is that you Jupiter?"
- 8.23 ♂ in shack, lks thru bag incl container w  
car in it, wallet, jewellery
- 9.33 family outside in <sup>4WD</sup> campervan. Young  
cple in campervan w. baby argue.
- 11.22 blonde girl plays w. piglet, tells bro. not to  
pee there. Fig. steals jersey fr. 4WD
- 13.31 ♂s talk over petrol pump.
- 14.30 ♀ lks f dog in café/shop "Crescendo or  
♂ confronts her.
- 15.56 ♂ tells family "off the map" dir. n. thru  
the hills (shortcut).
- 17.35 family travel along "shortcut"  
"this is so fucked... such bullshit"  
"watch yr fuckin' mouth"
- 18.24 R.C.
- 18.51 in campervan ♂s complain. Rock id.
- 19.58 spikes on road → vehicle crashes into rocks.  
Monstrous noise as spikes pulled away.
- 21.03 younger ♂ chases dog. ♀ - "we're so  
fucked"  
No cell coverage, 4WD axle broken.

22.59 Bob = older ♂ decides that he + son-in-law  
w. hve to walk f. help.

23.59 Bob gives teen son gun + prep. i f.  
h/elf. Son-in-law = Doug.

25.52 teen ♀ = Brenda. She + sis. argue.

27.51  
27.29 mother calls everyone to pray bef. Doug +  
Bob leave to get help.

28.28 cam pull back to breathing, view  
of fam. thru pinoes.

29.57 Brenda jokes abt wanting "the Chronic"  
Teen ♂ = Bobby, chases dog into hill.

32.10 sounds of dog squealing. Someone moves  
in front of cam, watches Bobby f. rock.

33.26 Bobby cries → ~~body of dog chest slit~~  
Creepy sound fx.

34.01 R.C Bobby falls. Disfigured girl touches  
him. Anoth mutant on rock shouts @  
her, eats meat (dog?)

35.47 Doug l'ks down into huge crater full  
of old vehicles. Crowd. He takes teddy  
bear fr. car.

38.05 taintacts d. into mine. Night.

38.21 Bob @ service station/shack, enters shop.  
Empty, phone + w'k.

40.14 Bob sees ear in box, takes out gun.

41.16 newspaper clippings abt miners refusing to  
leave during nuke testing, images of  
disfigured kids, reports of unexplained  
disapp. r.ces.

42.53  $\circ \rightarrow$  (servo  $\circ \rightarrow$ )  
~~shoots his head off w. shotgun Brief image~~  
~~remains~~

43.26 voice calls "Daddy daddy", hits B's  
 head ag car windows  $\rightarrow$  bloody. Bob  
 wheeled down into mine shaft

44.41 Family call out P. Bobby Bobby's body. Girl  
 sits w. him, hums, then runs away.

45.31 mother cleans Bobby up in caravan.

46.30 Bobby goes out gun drawn to investigate dis-  
 turbance  $\rightarrow$  other dog gone. Doug comes back

48.53 Doug + wife decide not to sleep in caravan.

51.04 others sleep, Bobby worries. When he hears dog,  
 goes out.

52.13  $\circ \rightarrow$  touches sleeping Brenda's head

52.41  $\circ \rightarrow$  = slavering mutant.

53.25 Brenda  $\rightarrow$   $\circ \rightarrow$ 's hand over her mouth.  
 Bobby tells Doug + wife "something's going  
 on."

54.21 ~~Bob chained to smeth.  $\rightarrow$  on fire~~

54.41 R.C.

54.59 Bob bellows, 2 muties in caravan  
 stealing. Doug tries to put out fire w.  
 extinguisher. Panic.

55.26 mutie eats pet bird.

56.0 mutie on Brenda mounts imply sex.  $\circ \rightarrow$   
mutie pulls him off.

56.30 B. screams, struggles w. mutie who  
 pushes up her nightie, undoes trousers.  
 mutie (2) sees baby

57.46 ♀ in caravan, mutie ① w. baby. She hits him w. frying pan, he draws gun on baby.

58.45 mutie pulls ♀'s dress open - bra - head below cam implied he sucks her breast.

59.24 mother shot in stomach.

59.45 ♀ stabs mutie ①, who shoots her in head. Only see blood splatter.

1.00.33 muties run away. Doug + Bobby find Brenda. Bob's body disappears.

1.01.12 gurgling almost dead ♀ (shot) Doug dies over her. Baby gone.

1.02.13 mutie w. binocs watches caravan, attacked by dog (must be 2nd dog). V. dark but blood fr. throat.

1.04.05 mother dies. Brenda catatonic. Doug says need a plan.

1.05.11 hears something outside caravan, turn off lights.

1.06.34 Doug finds walkie talkie strapped to dismembered arm. 2nd dog returns.

1.08.12 morning. Doug + dog follow tracks. Blood + flies.

1.09.03 Doug + dog enter minehaft

1.10.18 lots of graves in mine

1.11.04 D. + d. out of mine. Little girl watches. C. see houses.

1.12.03 Brenda sets fire to tyre Bobby lays booby traps.

1. 13-22 Doug + dog in deserted dusty town. Mannequins in tableaux on sidewalk, in house, on swings.
- 1-15-37 Doug sees baby in house then mutie pulling dead body.
- 1-17-35 Doug inside house, sound of ~~radio~~ <sup>TV</sup> people arguing. Mutie ♀ rocks, combs hair of something.
- 1-18-51 Doug cut down by mutie ♀. Shots of bones, flesh, mannequins.
- 1-20-29 Doug wakes up covered in blood, shut in freezer w. blood, body parts. Manager to break freezer door + get out.
- 1-22-23 Doug w. baseball bat → corpse w. flag stuck in head. Creepy voice sings American nat'l anthem.
- 1-23-31 mutie, w. large head, says never was house. Complains abt gov't "your people".
- 1-24-37 ♂ mutie w. pickaxe(?) swings it @ Doug repeatedly. Dog attacks mutie, seizes arm. Mutie hits dog, throws it.
- 1-25-36 Doug barricaded in bath in. Mutie breaks thru wall, grabs Doug by throat. m-chasing w. axe. ~~Doug sinks baseball bat in mutie's stomach then mutie hits Doug w. it.~~
- 1-27-28 mutie chops off D's fingers m-chopping @ him.
- 1-28-25 mutie holds axe blade @ D's throat. D. cries. Laughter. D. stabs mutie thru foot then thru ~~neck~~ <sup>neck</sup> w. US flag then axe thru top of head.
- 1-29-51 P. cuts d. anoth. mutie w. axe incl. pick thru head.

1.30.14 R.C

1.30.32 noise of dog attack mutie

1.30.46 girl = <sup>Ruby</sup> w. baby

1.32.02 Bobby's baby trap goes off. Bobby draws gun, circles perimeter

1.34.36 body of mother gone. Bobby follows spot of blood. ~~Mutie eating mother chase Bobby, who shoots haphazardly.~~

1.36.26 gas on in caravan,  $\rightarrow$  bound to it, Bobby Brenda escape + so does  $\rightarrow$  but he = still blown up when it explodes

1.37.46 Doug chases Ruby, who has baby. Corners her, points shotgun @ her. He = tackled by mutie (1). They fight;

1.38.56 mutie (1) hits Doug's head ~~ag ground~~ several times then chases Ruby.

1.39.43 D. rptdly hits mutie (1) in head w. shotgun then shoots him

1.40.44 Ruby gives Doug baby.

1.41.31 Ruby pushes mutie (1) off cliff + jumps himself as he tries to shoot D.

1.42.12 Brenda + Bobby am. st burning wreckage. Brenda buries axe in  $\rightarrow$ 's forehead as he tries to grab Bobby.

1.43.06 Doug, baby + dog return. ID (loud) Family hug. Back to binoc. view

1.44.05 Credits

1.48.02 ends (108.02)