

WRITTEN REASONS FOR DECISION SECTION 12

HEADNOTE

Type of Publication:	DVD
Title of Publication:	The Texas Chain Saw Massacre
Other known title:	The Texas Chainsaw Massacre (2 Disc Collectors Edition) Disc 1
OFLC Publication Reference No:	702507
Decision:	Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 16 years.
Display Conditions:	Nil.
Descriptive Note:	Contains horror scenes. Contains violence.

The publication entitled *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* is classified objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 16 years. This classification is because of the manner in which the publication deals with matters of horror, cruelty and violence.

The publication is the first disc in a double DVD box set. The DVD contains a feature, extra material relating to the feature and four trailers. The feature is a restored version of the 1974 American horror film *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, now widely regarded as a classic. The feature was extremely controversial when it was first released, and was banned in the UK until 1999. Its censorship history in New Zealand also reflects the concern created by the film. In 1977 the New Zealand Chief Censor of Films refused to approve the film for exhibition because of the way that it dealt with "anti-social behaviour, violence, crime and horror". Another version of the film was submitted in 1984 and the New Zealand Chief Censor of Films classified it as fit for "exhibition only to persons 18 years of age and over", with the descriptive note "Contains violence".

The feature begins with a voice-over and text describing the film as "an account of a tragedy" before the screen is filled with brief shots of decaying bodies. Eerie sound effects give way to radio reports of bodies having been dug up and posed in a graveyard, and accounts of inexplicable acts of violence. After the credits the viewer is presented with a now hackneyed scenario: a group of young people travelling in a van through a remote rural area. After encountering an odd hitchhiker, they run out of petrol and, after discovering the local gas station has a shortage, they begin to explore. Most of the group are caught and killed after they enter a large old house and encounter a large man who wears a mask made from human skin and treats them like animals to be slaughtered. This character, known as Leatherface, chases the only survivor from the group, Sally, with a chainsaw. When Sally runs to the petrol station for help it

transpires that Leatherface has a family, which includes the man at the station (known as "the cook"), the hitchhiker and a desiccated corpse-like grandfather. The cook presents Sally to the grandfather to kill but he is unable to and she escapes. Leatherface and the hitchhiker chase Sally down the road, where she flags down a truck that runs the hitchhiker over. Sally eventually leaves on the back of a ute, laughing hysterically and covered in blood. Leatherface whirls and dances on the side of the road, still wielding his chainsaw.

The extra material includes the original theatrical, radio and television advertising for the feature, along with the original trailers for other similarly notorious films of the past. There are also informative interviews and audio commentaries for the feature with the film's makers and actors.

In terms of s3(1) of the FVPC Act, the feature's treatment of horror themes was groundbreaking at the time it was made. Like 'Psycho' the film was inspired by the serial killer Ed Gein, and its horror is about seemingly ordinary people living in twisted family situations, rather than supernatural monsters.

In comparison to many modern films, the viewer is given little information about the characters and their motivations. The theme of slaughterhouses and people being slaughtered like animals is never discussed in detail but all the indicators are there: Leatherface wears a white apron, he hangs one victim on a hook, and so on. The sets and props also add to this theme, as one victim stumbles into a room full of feathers and bones and a squawking chicken in a small birdcage.

The strongest horrific images are arguably the early shots of corpses. Brief shots capture close-up images of decaying flesh, including eye-sockets and fingers. Other now standard horror sequences are likely to present as clumsy to today's audiences. For example, when Sally is being chased by members of the family she often appears to barely be moving and the character behind her is usually so close that the chase seems facetious. The editing is uneven, so that in several scenes Sally seems to calm down and then begin screaming again in an inexplicable manner. Near the end of the film Sally's face is suddenly covered with blood, possibly from the hitchhiker but this is unclear. Sally's hair often looks different within the same scene, moving from blonde to dyed dark by blood.

The viewer is often left to imagine gore and violence, and surprisingly little blood is actually seen. That which is seen may appear unconvincing to modern audiences because of its bright red colour. Sally's encounters with the grandparents may also be seen as slightly comical. The grandfather is clearly an actor wearing a wrinkled latex mask, and the corpse of the grandmother is unconvincing.

The film lacks the sophisticated special effects of modern horror films, but still retains some of its shock value because of its effective atmosphere, soundtrack and cinematography. The scenes are often uncomfortably long, as when the grandfather repeatedly tries and fails to hit Sally in the head with a mallet. A sense of foreboding is effectively built up in the early scenes. The psychological aspects of the film are largely what still make it horrific. The notions of a family member bringing home a captive woman in order to please his grandfather, people being treated like slaughterhouse animals and the grandfather sucking blood from Sally's finger are all incredibly unsettling. The images of Leatherface with his chainsaw, despite being a well-known cultural reference, still have a horrific power.

The horrific images in the trailers and advertising spots are largely drained of their original effect by hammy voiceovers and jerky editing.

The publication deals extensively with crime. The film consistently presents the attacks, murders and cruelty that occur in the plot as morally repugnant. The publication contains a lot of violence and cruelty, which is discussed below in detail 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 and acts of significant cruelty. The publication deals with violence and cruelty in a number of ways. The first acts of violence are merely unsettling, but add to the atmosphere of foreboding. The hitchhiker pulls out a knife and cuts the palm of his hand and, later, Franklin's arm. The blood looks fake, but, like much of the violence in the feature, the impact lies in the strength of the odd behaviour.

Most of the violence is perpetrated by Leatherface, and its effect on his victims is not seen in detail. His first appearance onscreen involves him hitting a character over the head with a mallet. The bloody body spasms and shakes before Leatherface drags it offscreen. He catches his next victim, Pam, and carries her into his killing room, where he hangs her on a meat hook. The viewer sees him lift Pam up, and her face as she screams, rather than any blood or wound in her back. Pam can also be seen hanging in the background, crying and screaming as Leatherface cuts up a body using a chainsaw. The part of the body he is cutting up cannot be seen, although there is a small amount of blood spray. A similar technique is used when Leatherface kills Franklin. Blood sprays onto his apron, and the chainsaw moves but the Franklin is not seen. Sally is treated extremely cruelly by the cook. He consoles her at first then approaches her with a rope and a sack. She tries to defend herself with a knife but he hits her repeatedly over the head with a broom and then ties her up and places the sack over her face. While he drives her back to the family house he pokes her occasionally with the wooden handle of the broom.

When they arrive at the house there is an extremely long scene in which Sally is tied to a chair while the family sit at the table. Sally is terrified throughout, begging the other characters to let her go and rescue her from Leatherface. Eventually the hitchhiker positions Sally kneeling over a bucket so that the grandfather can kill her. He repeatedly drops the mallet, although at one point he hits the back of Sally's head and blood appears. There is little actual violence in the scene – the tension is created by the threat of violence and cruelty.

When the hitchhiker is run over the viewer sees a shot of him being hit, his arms flailing and his face visible but his body blocked by the vehicle. There is then a distance shot of his body being crushed under the wheels. Leatherface also sustains an injury in this scene – he is hit in the head with a heavy tool and he falls and cuts his leg with the chainsaw. Blood can be seen. This violence represents Sally's triumph over the family in her escape to the outside world. The dominant effect of the publication is of an absorbing and effective horror feature. The extra material gives an idea of how the film was made, and the personalities behind it. The publication has merit as the feature is a well-made and interesting film with cult status as a classic low budget horror film. It was highly influential and many modern horror movies pay homage to its plot, characters and look. The publication is a well-known title, which may give it some appeal to a broad audience. However, the extra material and the relative lack of sophistication of the film's effects may decrease its audience. The packaging of the film in a box set with a wealth of other material means that it is highly likely to be watched by older horror movie fans who have already seen the feature.

The unrestricted availability of the publication is likely to be injurious to the public good due to the high extent of its treatment of matters of violence and horror. The images and treatment of horror, cruelty and violence would be extremely disturbing to younger teenagers and children. Adults and older teenager are more likely to have a sophisticated knowledge of the horror genre, and therefore able to put the film's themes and atmosphere into a context, aided by the extra material. Therefore the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 16 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	7/11/07	OFFIC Ref	702507
Applicant FVLB			
Applicant to Labelling Body Gamewizz Digital Entertainment			
Title (On Screen) The Texas Chain Saw Massacre			
Other known Title The Texas Chain Saw Massacre (2 Disc Collectors Edition) Disc 1			
Director/s Tobe Hooper			
Producer/s Tobe Hooper			
System Format DVD		Country of Origin USA	
Language/s English			

Classification R16	
Descriptive Note Contains horror scenes. Contains violence.	
Excision/s N/A	Date Cleared N/A
Total Running Time 1:20:31	Total Running Time after Excisions N/A

Copyright Warning / Umbrella Notices

0-29

- Menu: Play Feature
- Select Scenes
- Audio Setup
- Special Features

Select Scenes - divides feature into 13 scenes

Audio setup - options incl.:

- Audio commentary with Tobe Hooper, cinematographer Daniel Pearl and actor Gunnar Hansen
- Audio commentary with actor Marilyn Burns, Paul A. Partain, Allen Danziger and art director Robert A. Burr

} m. by serio reminding
} similar reminiscent feel

Special Features

a) Kim Henkel Interview

0-04 ♂ in sunglasses + hat. Discusses "female influence".

0-52 writing the script. Inspired by old case - ♂ procured
♂ victims f. older ♂, who murdered them.

2-59 media coverage of case.

4-57 film distribut'n, lack of contacts in industry.

6-52 probs w. sequels.

7-49 lik'g back on exp'ce + why it was unique.

8-26

b) Tobe Hooper Interview

0-05 talks abt Texas

1-15 the characters in film + conn'n to America @ time.

3-41 creating set in house.

5-17 shooting scene in woods.

7-18 shooting the end, ideas behind it.

9-17 contrs.

10-27 sound-mixing.

12-22 distribut'n.

13-46

c) Theatrical Trailer

0-06 clips fr. film, shots of meat, OTT ♂ vlover

0-37 ♀ chased + caught by Leatherface. Screams.
Raised axe.

1-43

a) TV Spot / Radio Spots

0-18 shorter version of theatrical trailer.

0-40 another version, close focus on face, eyes.

1-19 another version.

1-41 radio spot #1
creepy sound fx. ♂ vlover, screams.

2-11 radio spot #2
dialogue, screams, sound fx

2-40

e) Umbrella Trailers

① Last Howe On The Left
0-08 o/sear class-n notice

0-18 scratchy, dated 1/k. ♂ vlover.

0-50 ~~diat~~ bloody hand

1-42 chainsaw, blood on face, arm. Heart beat.

2-10

② The Hills Have Eyes

0-02 o/sear class-n notice.

0-17 OTT ♂ vlover. Dialogue. Screams, explosion.

1-45 "murdered, raped, burned byt not beaten.
knife @ mutant's throat.

2-53

③ Eaten Alive.

0.02 olease class n notice .

0.14 ♂ OTT vlover . ♂ chases ♀ w. scythe .
Alligator / croc .

1.30 ♀ struggles, tied to bed .

1.56 ♂ grabbed by alligator .

2.14

(4) Dawn Of The Dead

0.02 olease class n notice .

0.23 OTT ♂ vlover . Bury scenes ♂s rushing, panic .

1.35 zombies hve blue faces . Zombies in mall .

2.49

0.04 credits

0.16 text + ♂ vlover "an account of a tragedy...
mad and macabre ... bizarre crimes" etc .

1.05 August 18 1973

shots of meat / decaying flesh, clup . Creepy
sound . Flashbulb effect . Teeth, eye socket etc .
Sawing sound .

2.24 Fleshless face . Radio vlover abt "gristly work
of art" → posed corpses in cemetery .

3.32 The Texas Chain Saw Massacre
Cast: Marilyn Burne, Allen Darnziger, Paul A. Partain

4.29 radio conts - suicide attacks etc .

4.57 dead amadillo on road .

5.24 van stops by road . ♂ + ♂ in wheelchair .
♂ in chair urinates in can .

- 6.18 ♂ in chair = Franklin, falls down bank.
- 6.43 back in van. ♀ reads zodiac. Drive past crowded cemetery. ♀ fr. van wants to check whether granddad's body = ok.
- 8.50 back in van - bad smell :- of old slaughterhouse.
- 9.20 crowd. Franklin talks abt probs killing cow in old days.
- 10.43 they pick up h/hiker. He = odd. He + Franklin talk abt methods of slaughter. Pic's of carcasses.
- 13.07 h/hiker w. F.'s knife, holds it ag finger then cuts palm of his hand, laughs.
- 14.14 h/hiker pulls razor/knife fr. sock then retr it. Takes photos using old cam.
- 16.47 h/hiker sets fire to pic. → fr panic, he cuts F.'s arm → blood. They throw him out of van.
- 18.40 ♀ reads out horoscopes. All = bad.
- 19.46 no petrol @ gas station. They ask for directions to the old Franklin house. ♂ warns them off.
- 21.58 F. + ♂ talk in van.
- 23.26 driving along to 1'k @ old house.
- 25.29 h/hiker smeared blood on side of van. They stop to explore house. F. stays by van.
- 26.29 L'k'g and dark, dirty house. F. tries to manoeuvre his way in.
- 28.48 F. annoyed at being left on own.
- 29.59 bones + feathers.

- 30.36 Pam + boyfriend run to swimming hole → dried up.
House in ~~the~~ distance. ♂ wants to go there
for petrol.
- 32.29 machine noise @ house. Lots of old cars,
rickety buildings. Noise = generator.
- 33.42 ♂ knocks on door of house. Tooth on ground.
Pam = disgusted.
- 35.04 ♂ goes into house. Skulls on wall, piggy noises,
Leatherface apprs, hits ♂ over head w. mallet.
His body shakes (electrocuted like on killing floor?)
- dragged in, door closed.
- 36.10 Pam calls out, lks into house, enters.
- 37.06 chicken sounds, feathers on floor, bones - Chicken
in cage. Human bones arngd on furniture
+ fr. ceiling.
- 38.56 Pam retches, runs out, LF catches her,
carries her into his r'm. Implied he hangs
her on meathook. She screams.
- 39.52 LF starts up chainsaw, his face, implied
he cuts up ♂'s body. Pam in background
screaming, crying.
- 40.42 Franklin, Sally + ♂ (Jerry) @ van. F. scared
of hiker. Jerry lves to go to swimming hole.
- 42.45 F. + S. talk.
- 44.13 Jerry @ house, knocks on door, finds their
towels.
- 45.16 Jerry in house, LF's r'm. No sign of other.
Pam in ice chest. LF enters, hits J. +
shuts Pam back in chest/freezer.
- 47.12 night time.

- 47.32 F. + S @ van. S. keeps horn. They argue abt what to do. S. says + I've w/out J.
- 49.23 panickig ∴ f hoe van keys. Struggle over tach.
- 50.44 S. + F. l'k'g for the others. V. dark.
- 52.14 LF appr w. chainsaw. Tow-s F., mount of chainsaw but ≠ see violence. S. runs. LF chases her.
- 54.15 S. runs toward house screaming f. help.
- 54.59 inside house S. runs upstairs. Mummified-l'kg decayed bodies on chairs. LF enters. S. jumps out window.
- 56.21 LF chases S. thru woods etc.
- 57.56 @ gas station. She gets inside, ♂ helps her onto bench. She pants etc. He = comfortig, says will get truck, lves door open.
- 59.51 barbeque spit. ♂ back w. rope + sack. She grabs knife. He hits her w. broom. Screaming, struggle.
- 1-01-30 he ties her wrists beh. her back, rag in her mouth, sack over head, drags her out to truck.
- 1-03-33 he drives, screams f. sack. Implied he prods @ sack w. wooden handle.
- 1-04-58 ♂ gets out, kicks @ h/hiker. Tells him he should hve stayed away fr. graveyard.
- 1-06-10 @ house, h/hiker + ♂ bring S. into house. ♂ tells LF. off.
- 1-07-06 h/hiker has tied S. to chair, taken sack off her head.

- 1-09-32 h/hiker + LF. carry Grandpa in chair d/tains
S. struggles, whimpers.
- 1-10-48 somebody cuts S.'s fingers while h/hiker holds
knife to her throat. Grandpa sucks blood fr.
S.'s fingers.
- 1-12-04 S. comes to @ dinner table. She screams +
h/hiker, LF howl + moan.
- 1-13-15 LF paws @ S.'s face. She begs them to make
LF stop.
- 1-15-44 S. cries. H/hiker wants to let grandpa have a
"whack" @ S.
- 1-16-59 h/hiker unties S., posit'ns her on knees over
bucket. LF tries to put mallet in grandpa's
hand but he keeps dropp'g it.
- 1-18-16 S. hit in back of head ⇒ blood. S.
struggles, jumps out of window. Blood on
face, legs.
- 1-18-59 h/hiker follows + LF. S. runs screaming.
- 1-19-34 on road. Truck hits + runs over h/hiker,
stops f. S. LF follows.
- 1-20-26 FF chases S. + driver. Driver throws
someth. @ LF, who falls + cuts leg w.
chainsaw.
- 1-21-13 S. in back of ute, screams. LF recedes
in distance. S. laughs hysterically.
- 1-21-45 LF whirls/dances w. chainsaw.
- 1-21-57 credits.
- 1-23-21 ends (83.21).

Menu: Play Feature
 Select Scenes
 Audio Setup
 Special Features

Feature: The Texas Chain Saw Massacre

4 * 5
 83.21

O.T.C: Copyright Warning/ Umbrella Notices

0.29

Kim Henkel Interview

8.26

Tobe Hooper Interview

13.46

Theatrical Trailer

1.43

TV Spot / Radio Spots

2.40

~~Umbrella Trailers~~ Last House On The Left

2.10

The Hills Have Eyes

2.53

Eaten Alive

2.14

Dawn Of The Dead

2.49

~~2.10~~

120.31