

WHIPRASH

NO 4

£1

SPECIAL

'WIPED NASTY'
ISSUE



INCLUDES:

CRITIQUE, COMMENT
AND
DESCRIPTION
OF THE BANNED FILMS,

ALSO:

THE RUNNING MAN
HOWLING 3
NEAR DARK
THE SERPENT AND THE
RAINBOW
PROM NIGHT 2
GHOSTHOUSE
LA VISIONE DEL SABBA
PLUS NEWS, REVIEWS,
ARTICLES, LETTERS,
AND POSSIBLY MORE!

Reader's Poll RESULTS.

Remember this?

You know, that sheet of silly questions you filled in between issues 1 and 2? Well anyhow, here are the results, and though this may not be the most accurate poll ever conducted, I mean c'mon, I put it together! It does however give a fair idea of the opinions of the readership of this publication, and I dare say the British horror fan in general. All returned surveys have been carefully collated, and the results have been compiled from the returned surveys, so although not as comprehensive as absolutely possible, it is as I said a decent guide.

The first list is perhaps the most important (and interesting), the answer to question 5. "In no particular order list your top ten horror films of all-time." The results have been gained by totting up the numbers of times a certain film was listed:

THE TOP TEN.

1) THE EVIL DEAD (1982)

Very close indeed between first and second placed films, but Raimi's epic finally made it, and out of interest, this film actually appeared in a mammoth 75% of reader's top tens!

2) ZOMBIES - DAWN OF THE DEAD (1979)

As I said, a very, very close runner-up, and even though the majority of British fans have never seen a complete version it still rates so highly.

3) DAY OF THE DEAD (1985)

This surprised me, I rate this one highly, but I was under the impression that this was looked upon as a bit of a failure amongst fans, obviously I'm wrong, and I now feel vindicated for my comments in our first issue.

4) ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS (1979)

Yes, you read it right! It surprised me too, but it just goes to show the popularity of not only Fulci and the so-called nasties, but especially the zombie genre, also the highest placed Italian film.

5) TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE (1975)

About time we got to see part 2 is'nt it?

6) HALLOWEEN (1978)

Re-affirms my trust in you guys, as this is one of my faves, and cast your eyes downwards, not a FRIDAY THE 13TH in sight!

7) A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (1985)

Nobody liked the sequels it would seem.

8) EVIL DEAD 2 (1987).

Pulled only a quarter of the votes of the original, but still a popular film, the message would seem to be more gore, less laughs!

9) THE THING (1982)

Carpenter's second in the ten, and only other in top 20, his next most popular was CHRISTINE.

10) SUSPIRIA (1976)

Far and away Argento's most popular film, second Dino flick in ten.

AND THE NEXT TEN WENT LIKE THIS:

11) RE-ANIMATOR (1985)

12) VIDEODROME (1983)

13) ALIENS (1986)

14) STREET TRASH (1987)...Where did this come from?

15) ALIEN (1979)

16) RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD (1985)

17) EXORCIST (1975)

18) LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1973)

19) DEMONS (1986)...So we do like it afterall?

20) CANNIBAL FEROX (1980)

Last word to the gorehounds, and fourth Italian film in 20,

OTHER RESULTS WERE AS THIS:

FAVOURITE DIRECTORS: 1) GEORGE ROMERO; 2) DARIO ARGENTO;
3) LUCIO FULCI; 4) DAVID CRONENBERG; 5) JOHN CARPENTER.

FAVOURITE FILMS: 1) AMERICAN; 2) ITALIAN; 3) BRITISH a poor 3rd also, 1) ZOMBIES; 2) MONSTERS; 3) SLASHERS, 4) ALIENS.

Finally, the questions regarding the fanzine's contents have been taken into consideration and are currently being acted upon. Thanks for your co-operation on this.

WHIPLASH MAIL.

write to: JOHN HILL, 29 SKIRBECK ROAD,
BOSTON, LINCS, PE21 6DA.

Dear John,

Thankyou for sending me WHIPLASH SMILE 3. I'm afraid I have to blow raspberries in the general direction of PREDATOR. I mean for a start what's the point of having a big ugly monster if he's going to fight fair? He should be dumped out of the uglies union. And wow, was'nt it convenient that the only thing the monster can't see through is mud, the one thing Arnie and his un-merry men are up to their elbows in?!? Good job the monster did'nt land in the arctic eh, or else goodbye world (Humm, perhaps not such a bad thing, if it disposes of half-baked movies such as this).

Another film that was accused of sparking off violence that Paul Higson had forgot was A CLOCKWORK ORANGE.

Time to ride off into the sunset, eyes watering as I've forgot my sunglasses. All the best to you and yours, and til KING KONG does the boogie-woogie, I'll be yours faithfully,

Philip Collins,

Leyton, London.

P.S. Is Elmer Fudpucker the same Elmer Fudpucker who's in the Guinness book of records for stuffing cherries up his nose?

WELL PHILIP, YOU'RE ENTITLED TO YOUR OPINION, EVEN IF IT IS THE WRONG ONE! OOOOPS, THAT SOUNDED A BIT SHOCK XPRESSISH DID'NT IT? APOLOGIES PHIL, AND TO ANSWER YOUR ELMER FUDPUCKER QUERY, I SUGGEST YOU LOOK AT PAGE 66 OF THE APRIL 86 EDITION OF VIDEO THE MAGAZINE!

Dear John,

Thanks so much for WHIPLASH SMILE, very, very impressive! Why is it British fanzines are so much better than American ones? I have now read three (yours, SAMHAIN and IMAGINATOR) and quite frankly they out perform any I've found regularly published here.

I appreciate the amount of wordage you squeeze into an issue. Pictures, stills, artwork etc are nice, BUT it's the text that makes a fanzine and I'm happy to see you don't ignore this very important asset.

From your letters page, it sounds like folks there (and in Finland!) are still subjected to the government's outright banning of films. What a shame as it gives them a reputation they hardly deserve, the demand for these titles would'nt be half as great if they were freely available.

Phil Bond's piece on Italian zombies was great, only now are these films finding coverage in the u.s. Richard Griffiths CRYPT OF TERROR once again covered a choice of subject matter I truly enjoy, and is an interesting forum for his views. A dry sense of humour pervades, and I for one am glad he's to appear regularly. A lot of editors are better packagers than actual writers, but I'm pleased to say John, that you're the exception your reviews of DOLLS and PRINCE OF DARKNESS help point this out. In your comments on TEXAS CHAINSAW 2 you encapsulated all the elements that made Hooper's film an impossible act to follow, I can't bring myself to watch the second one, though I must say your comments have tempted me.

Again I appreciate the issue and hope to see future editions.

Craig Ledbetter,

'HI-TECH TERROR'

Kingwood, Texas,

U.S.A.

THANKS CRAIG FOR THE GREAT LETTERS, NICE TO KNOW OUR EFFORTS ARE BEING APPRECIATED SO FAR AWAY!

CRAIG IS THE EDITOR OF THE U.S. FANZINE, HI-TECH TERROR (SEE 'THE FANZINE SCENE') AND WILL BE JOINING THE STAFF OF THIS VERY PUBLICATION SOON.

VIDEO NASTY Checklist.

AS a means of starting off our special coverage of the video-nasties, this issue, printed below is the current list of films banned in the United Kingdom, which were outlawed following the Attorney General's statement in the House of Commons on 23rd of July 1984. The following have been subject to prosecution under section 2 of the Obscene Publications Act of 1959.

- ABGURD (AKA ANTHROPOPHAGUS II; HORRIBLE) (Italy 1981)
Directed by Peter Newton (AKA Joe D'Amato; Aristide Massaccesi)
Starring George Eastman; Annie Belle; Ian Danby; Charles Borromel. MEDUSA HOME VIDEO.
- ANTHROPOPHAGUS (AKA ANTHROPOPHAGUS THE BEAST; THE GRIM REAPER) (Italy 1980)
Directed by Joe D'Amato. Starring Tisa Farrow; George Eastman; Saverio Vallone; Vanessa Steiger. VIDEO FILM PRODUCT
- AXE (AKA LISA; CALIFORNIA AXE MASSACRE) (USA 1977)
Directed by Frederick R Friedel. Starring Leslie Lee; Ray Green; Jack Cannon; Frederick R Friedel. VRO.
- BEAST IN HEAT (AKA HORRIFYING EXPERIMENTS OF THE SS) (Italy 1979)
Directed by Ivan Katansky (rumoured to be Walerian Borowzyk)
Starring Macha Magail; Kim Gatti; John Braun. JVI.
- BLOODBATH (AKA BAY OF BLOOD; TWITCH OF DEATH NERVE) (Italy 1971)
Directed by Mario Bava. Starring Claudine Auger; Luigi Pistilli; Claudio Volonte; Laura Betti. HOKUSHIN.
- BLOOD FEAST (USA 1963)
Directed by Herschell Gordon Lewis. Starring Thomas Wood; Connie Mason; Mal Arnold; Lyn Bolton. ASTRA.
- BLOOD RITES (AKA THE GHASTLY ONES) (USA 1969)
Directed by Andy Milligan. Starring Don Williams; Veronica Radburn; Maggie Rogers. SCORPIO VIDEO.
- BLOODY MOON (Spain/Germany 1981)
Directed by Jess Franco. Starring Olivia Pascal; Christoph Moosbrugger; Nadja Gerganoff. INTERVISION.
- BURNING, THE (USA 1980)
Directed by Tony Maylem. Starring Brian Matthews; Leah Ayres; Fisher Stevens; Holly Hunter. THORN EMI.
- CANNIBAL APOCALYPSE (AKA CANNIBALS IN THE STREETS; INVASION OF THE FLESH HUNTERS) (Italy 1980)
Directed by Anthony Dawson (AKA Antonio Margheriti). Starring John Saxon; John Morghen; Elisabeth Turner; Cindy Hamilton; May Heatherly; Cinzia Carolis. REPLAY.
- CANNIBAL FEROX (AKA MAKE THEM DIE SLOWLY) (Italy 1981)
Directed by Umberto Lenzi. Starring Lorraine De Selle; John Morghen; Bryan Redford; Richard Bolla. REPLAY.
- CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST (Italy 1979)
Directed by Ruggero Deodato. Starring Francesca Ciardi; Luca Robert Kerman; Perry Pirkamen; R Bolla. GO VIDEO.
- CANNIBAL MAN (AKA APARTMENT ON THE 13TH FLOOR) (Spain 1972)
Directed by Eloy de la Iglesia. Starring Vincente Para; Emma Cohen; Eusebio Poncela; Vicky Lagos. INTERVISION.
- DEVIL HUNTER (AKA MAN HUNTER) (Italy/Spain/W.Germany 1980)
Directed by Clifford Brown (AKA Jess Franco). Starring Al Cliver; Ursulla Fellner. CINE HOLLYWOOD.
- DON'T GO IN THE WOODS ALONE (USA 1981)
Directed by James Bryan. Starring Nick McCalland; James P. Hayden. VIDEO NETWORK.
- DRILLER KILLER (USA 1979)
Directed by Abel Ferrara. Starring Ferrara; Carolyn Marz; Harry Schultz; Baybi Day; Alan Wynworth. VIPCO.
- EVILSPEAK (USA 1982)
Directed by Eric Weston. Starring Clint Howard; R G Armstrong; Joseph Cortese; Claude Earl Jones. VIDEOSPACE
- EXPOSE (AKA HOUSE ON STRAW HILL; TRAUMA) (UK 1975)
Directed by James Kenelm Clarke. Starring Udo Kier; Fiona Richmond; Linda Hayden; Patsy Smart. INTERVISION.
- FACES OF DEATH (USA 1980)
Directed by Conan Le Cilaire. Introduced by Dr Francis B Gross. ATLANTIS.
- FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE (AKA 1313 FURY DRIVE) (USA 1977)
Directed by Robert Endelson. Starring William Sanderson. VISION ON.
- FLESH FOR FRANKENSTEIN (AKA ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN) (USA 1973)
Directed by Paul Morrissey (or Antonio Margheriti, if you believe the Aurum encyclopedia). Starring Udo Kier; Monique Van Vooren; Joe Dallesandro; Carlo Mancini. VIPCO.
- FOREST OF FEAR (AKA TOXIC ZOMBIES) (USA 1980)
Directed by Charles McCrann. Starring Charles Austin; John Amplas. MONTE VIDEO.
- GESTAPO'S LAST ORGY (AKA BORREAUSS) (Italy 1976)
Directed by Cesare Canevar. Starring Marc Loud; Danielle Levy; Maristella Greco. VIDEO FILM PROS.
- HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY (Italy 1981)
Directed by Lucio Fulci. Starring Katherine MacColl; Giovanni de Nava; Dagmar Lassander; Daniele Dora. VIDEOMANIA.
- HOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE PARK (Italy 1981)
Directed by Ruggero Deodato. Starring David Hess; John Morghen; Annie Belle; SKY.
- ISLAND OF DEATH (USA/GREECE 1972)
Directed by Nico Mastorakis. Starring Bob Belling; Jane Ryale. VPD.
- I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE (AKA DAY OF THE WOMAN) (USA 1981)
Directed by Meir Zarchi. Starring Camille Keaton; Eron Tabor; Richard Pace; Anthony Nicholls. ASTRA.
- LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (AKA KRUG & CO; SEX CRIME OF THE CENTURY) (USA 1972)
Directed by Wes Craven. Starring David Hess; Lucy Grantham; Sandra Cassel; Marc Shffier; Fred Lincoln. VPD.
- LOVE CAMP 7 (USA 1968)
Directed by Lee Frost. Starring Bob Cresse; David Friedman. ABBEY.
- MADHOUSE (Italy 1982)
Directed by Quidio G Assonitia. Starring Michael Macres; Trish Everly. MEDUSA.
- MARDI GRAS MASSACRE (USA 1971)
Directed by Jack Weis. Starring Curt Dawson; Laura Misch. DERRAN.
- NIGHTMARES IN A DAMAGED BRAIN (AKA NIGHTMARES) (USA 1981)
Directed by Romano Scavolini. Starring Baird Stafford; Sharon Smith; C J Cooke; Mike Cribben; John Watkins. WORLD OF VIDEO.
- NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES (Mexico 1968)
Directed by Rene Cardona. Starring C L Moctezuma; A M Solares. IVER.
- NIGHT OF THE DEMON (USA 1981)
Directed by James Wasson. Starring Joy Allen; Michael Cutt. IVER.
- SNUFF (USA/Argentina 1972)
Directed by Michael Findley. No cast available. ASTRA.
- SS EXPERIMENT CAMP (Italy 1979)
Directed by Sergio Garrone. Starring Sirpa Lane; Carl Sist. GO VIDEO.
- TENEBRAE (AKA UNSANE) (Italy 1982)
Directed by Dario Argento. Starring Anthony Franciosa; John Saxon; Guiliano Gemma; Daria Nicolodi. VIDEO MEDIA.
- WEREWOLF AND THE YETI (AKA NIGHT OF THE HOWLING BEAST) (Spain 1975)
Directed by Miguel Iglesias Bonns. Starring Paul Naschy; Grace Mills; Castillo Escalona; Silvia Solar. CANON.
- ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS (AKA ZOMBIE; ZOMBIE 2) (Italy 1979)
Directed by Lucio Fulci. Starring Tisa Farrow; Ian McCullough; Richard Johnson; Aretta Gay; Al Cliver. VIPCO.

The Great VIDEO NASTY Debate.

MAIN TEXT BY JOHN HILL.

The obvious question I suppose is why cover this topic now? Half a decade after it was first an issue. Well firstly, there are many new fans out there who weren't into the genre when the debate surrounding the dreaded video nasty was first raging, and from our survey there were a great number of requests for coverage of the subject. Next, I don't think the subject should be allowed to be forgotten, though in many cases, the 39 films currently banned are pretty poor, it is what they stand for that is important, namely the mindless censorship of our freedom to view what we choose in the sanctity of our own homes. Finally, in the light of recent events, it seems a very suitable time to re-investigate these films.

So, what is a video nasty? Well a video nasty is a media-spawned phrase for a media-spawned phenomena, it was apparently Mary Whitehouse who first came up with the term during a meeting of her vegetarian cronies who apparently had nothing else better to do, and the gutter-press naturally soon latched onto this, and before too long the term 'video nasty' was being splashed across the front pages of the popular brain-dead tabloids. The snowballing effect of this public outcry was the eventual drawing up of a shortlist of some sixty odd films, chosen apparently at random from guidelines that were vague to say the least.

What constitutes a video nasty?

The original guidelines as to what could be deemed corruptive, and therefore open for prosecution and eventual outlawing, were frankly (like the whole proceedings) a joke. At the time I remember reading an early video magazine which printed the somewhat dubious list of acts for which a film could be banned. These included, cruelty to animals; rape; abuse of children; violent sex; torture; cannibalism; the violent use of ordinary household items (?); perversion (a somewhat vague category to say the least) and several other factors too absurd to mention. In fact, via these guides it was possible to ban just about anything, from JAWS (cruelty to animals) to FRIDAY THE 13TH (household items), fortunately though, the department of public prosecutions and the various legal bodies behind the prosecuting of movies, weren't quite as thorough as that, and managed to whittle out a mere sixty films, though the list gradually went down, as they realised just how ridiculous some of their frantic decisions had been. I should think in reality, they had a good idea of what they wanted off the shelves to begin with, and drew their guidelines up around these titles, hence the banning of anything with the word 'cannibal' in the title, including the relatively tepid Spanish film CANNIBAL MAN, which includes no cannibalism whatsoever.

Why ban films at all?

It really depends on which side of the fence you sit on to answer this question, but I expect the majority of readers of this magazine are anti-censorship, at least I hope you are, or else I might as well pack up and go home now.

If you are therefore anti-censorship, then the only reason you can see for banning these films is, in actuality, the real reason, namely that back in 1982, and up until this very day, a group of hopeless, wimpy conservative MPs desperate to make a name for themselves in a political party dominated by the least sympathetic prime minister this country has ever had the misfortune to have, decided to pick on a suitably easy target, to gain a bit of publicity for themselves, and as the British press is so Tory-dominated they succeeded in doing just that, making a name for themselves, albeit briefly.

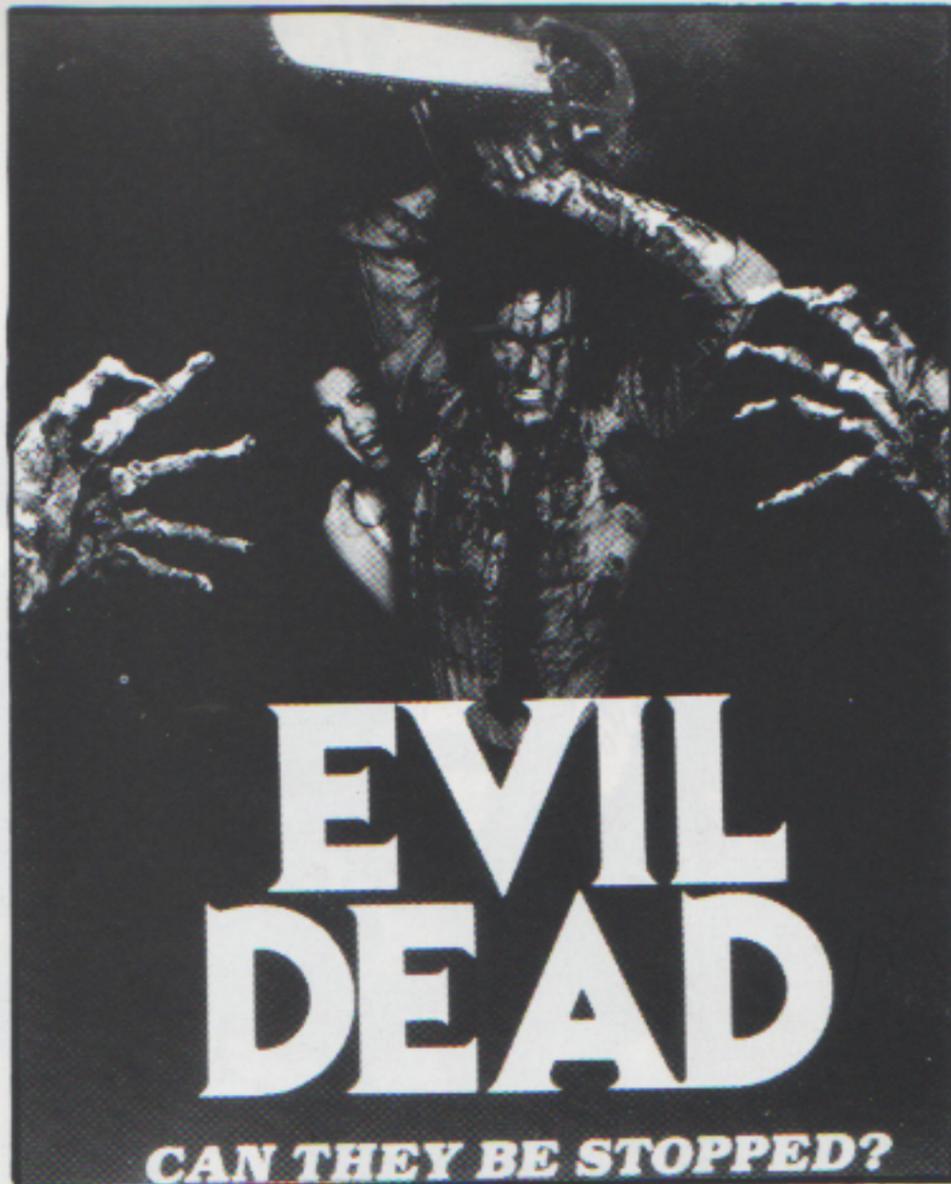
The pro-censorship lobby, however would undoubtedly refute these claims, on the grounds that these films are



Unvorstellbares wird auf der Kino-
leinwand zur grausamen Wirklichkeit!



▲ GERMAN ARTWORK FOR 'CANNIBAL FEROX'



evil, corruptive, dangerous properties, that must be taken away from the gullable public, before our nation is swept by hordes of psychotic citizens with cannibalistic fixations, running around terrorizing the honest, decent clean-living folk that the government represents. The arguments for banning films seem to be as follows: violent films encourage violent behaviour, this is of course utter bollocks, the only people who could possibly be affected in such a way are mentally unstable persons, who should'nt be let anywhere near a video in the first place, besides which they probably could'nt work out how to use one anyway. But, let's suppose a mentally unstable person is affected by violence he or she sees on a video cassette, is that the fault of the film-makers, is it something for which the majority must suffer for? I say no, perhaps if the police spent less time running around the country seizing videos, and spent their time more constructively actually putting such dangerous individuals behind bars then the world would become a safer place. Now I realise this is the simple solution to a complex problem, but the point is, it has never, and will never be proved that watching faked violence on a television or cinema screen can trigger off the urge to immitate such an act in reality, well at least not in the case of an intelligent, reasonable human being, of which I count myself one. And obviously the majority of people must be intelligent in this country if they keep electing a conservative government who of course are never wrong, or am I missing the point? The one strand of people who are constantly mentioned for protection against the horrors of video horrors are, of course, children, now I can see the reasons behind this judgement, for children are lower in intellect and perhaps they can't differentiate between fantasy and reality, though I doubt this is a fact, kids are'nt as stupid as we make believe. I for one have been watching horror films since I was about seven or eight years old, and that certainly is'nt bragging, but a fact, at first I watched on TV, then with the advent of pre-recorded tapes, on video, and of course when old enough I started at the cinema. I have never suffered nightmares, never once had the urge to kill anyone (at least not connected with film influence, though I do get a little aggressive when I see Mary Whitehouse sticking her nossle in on TV) and have always enjoyed the experience. Now I know this is'nt the case with everyone, several children can't watch stuff like that without suffering nightmares, well that's fair enough, but surely in such cases it should be the parents who do the controlling, not the government with an outright banning of material? Though having said all that in the anti-censorship side, I must admit there are times when censorship should be employed, for example on films such as HEAST IN HEAT and SS EXPERIMENT CAMP, which use such a hideous subject matter as nazi war crimes (real events) to gain an audience, in such cases I agree with the censors, these films are sick, and anyone who can gain pleasure from them is just as sick. Now there are no people out there who are going to immitate Hitler (at least I hope not), so that argument goes out of the window, but what the people in the nazi war-camps went through should never be forgotten, as they were subjected to the lowest nadir of human nature, and their experiences should never

as chosen by PAUL HIGSON.

A tribute to the stupidity of the police and moralists alike.

1) ZOMBIE FLESH EASTER.

HISTORY: This is, of course, a classic misprinting of ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS. The misprint was regarded as another movie and added briefly to the list, either that or a bogus joke on the horror fan itself.

2) APOCALYPSE NOW.

HISTORY: The police at fault here, grabbed copies of the famous Francis Ford Coppola movie from the shelves, mistaking it for CANNIBAL APOCALYPSE.

3) THE BIG RED ONE.

HISTORY: Can this be true that they mistakenly picked on this as a hard-core porno courtesy of the film's title, or is it just another inspired hoax?

4) FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE.

HISTORY: In October 1984 this was one of the last four titles added to the list of nasties, along with AXE, the relatively anaemic FUNHOUSE and THE REVENGE OF THE BOGEYMAN, and only because it showed clips from the first movie. The latter two were dropped from the list shortly afterwards (strangely, THE BEYOND, THE LIVING DEAD AT THE MANCHESTER MORGUE and CONTAMINATION left the list before them). The thing that makes FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE such an odd choice for a nasty is, incredibly, the fact that the film was rated 15/AA!

5) CHILDREN OF THE CORN.

HISTORY: This movie as a Thorn EMI release had already visited the certification/censorship boards of not only the BBFC and the BVA but also Thorn EMI's TESE, and yet in November 84, when the Hampshire police seized it from local shops. They were advised to return them, and did so. Another film that had gone under the revised certification boards for video release that was hassled extensively, was VIDEODROME, whilst POSSESSION too, was taken from many shelves during 1985, despite its reprieve from the nasties list and a screening on Channel 4, the only nasty (with the exception of the 'accidents' THE BIG RED ONE and APOCALYPSE NOW) to be screened completely on television!

6) THE DEVIL AND MAX DEVLIN.

HISTORY: In 1982 while publications like Video Times and Popular Video were singing along with Whitehouse, and fainting at the sight of serial killers and rape-cum-revenge flicks on video, Liam T Sanford was jumping to the defence of the cine uglies courtesy of the pages of Video Viewer. Even both then he was active in their defence when earlier in the year at the height of the nasties hiatus he ran up a spoof petition demanding the banning of a sick and horrific film readily available on video. The idea behind the petition was to prove that the local watch committee and police force were indiscriminately seizing films not because they were necessarily of a so-called nasty nature, but because the films were simply horror with regards to title or cover. The bogus petition was handed over to the watch committee who beaming innocently handed it in to the local police station, who promptly dispatched several of their officers to the local video shops demanding that the dealers hand over this offensive title. Upon requesting the title they were met with amazed and hysterically amused dealers and shop assistants. The film that led to the local watch committee being embarrassed, the so-called sick and disgusting 'nasty' that left the local constabulary with red faces was in fact, the PG rated Walt Disney film THE DEVIL AND MAX DEVLIN, which starred Bill Cosby as a black devil in this family comedy!



be trivialised for the sake of an exploitive film.

The films themselves.

The current 39 films that are illegal in this country are an eclectic bunch to say the least, they come from most sub-genres, and most didn't deserve consideration for prosecution, let alone outright banning.

Most of the outlawed films are low-budget offerings, that would probably have gone on to live out a life of relative obscurity, had it not been for the unmerited publicity they gained at the hands of the DPP. There are several films on the list that headed the outrage, such as I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE, a thoroughly repulsive and slimy film about rape and revenge that sinks to our most basest instincts. DRILLER KILLER, a complicated and paranoid film picked out for its gory slayings, then there was LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT a powerful sleaze epic concerning rape. One film that was at the fore-front of the nasties campaign was FACES OF DEATH, a rather unpleasant documentary showing various people and animals suffering or getting snuffed, though hardly the most tasteful film ever made, quite how it can be justified a nasty when similar scenes are transmitted on the tea-time news is a mystery. Another of the more infamous films to find itself on the banned list, was SNUFF, a wonderfully successful gimmick film, which tagged a supposedly real, yet obviously fake murder of a young actress onto a rather dull Mansonesque storyline, the resulting outrage about the possibility of 'snuff' films found the film being caught up in a blitz of controversy, not to mention a shower of financial rewards. A good deal of the films currently banned in the UK are from the Italian splatter wave of the late seventies, and early eighties, such films as D'Amato's ABSURD and ANTHROPOPHAGUS; Deodato's HOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE PARK and CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST; Lenzi's CANNIBAL FERROX; Fulci's HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY and ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS; and even Argento's TENEBRAE. These films are usually technically inept, yet deliriously entertaining, they cannot be taken seriously,

HORROR MARKET

WANTED: Information on 'PHOENIX 5' Australian TV series. Also wanted, INVASION OF THE BLOOD FARMERS & CANNIBAL FEROX on VHS format.

Write to: ROB ROBINSON, 44 HAYCLOSE CRESCENT, KENDAL PARKS, CUMBRIA, LA9 7NT.

WANTED: Rare horror and science fiction magazines/fanzines from 1957 to present day.

HARALD DOLEZAL, DEIMGASSE 44, 2324 SCHWECHAT-RANNERSDORF, AUSTRIA.

WANTED: Good horror books (paper and hardback), and DAWN OF THE DEAD; ALIEN; EVIL DEAD I & II; ELM STREET I; THE THING (82); ALLIGATOR; TEXAS CHAINSAW and any Hammer (VHS originals). GARRY MACKENZIE, 17 GLENDOE TERRACE, INVERNESS, IV3 6EQ.

WANTED: Uncut zombie films on VHS. SIMON SMITH, 25 PEMROKE AVE, BALBY, DONCASTER, DN4 8HG.

WANTED: VHS or BETA copies of THE ISLAND, WITCHFINDER GENERAL, any uncut Bruce Lee movies and any episodes of SPACE 1999. ROGER CREAIS, 17 PINWOOD AVE, SIDCUP, KENT, DA15 8BB.

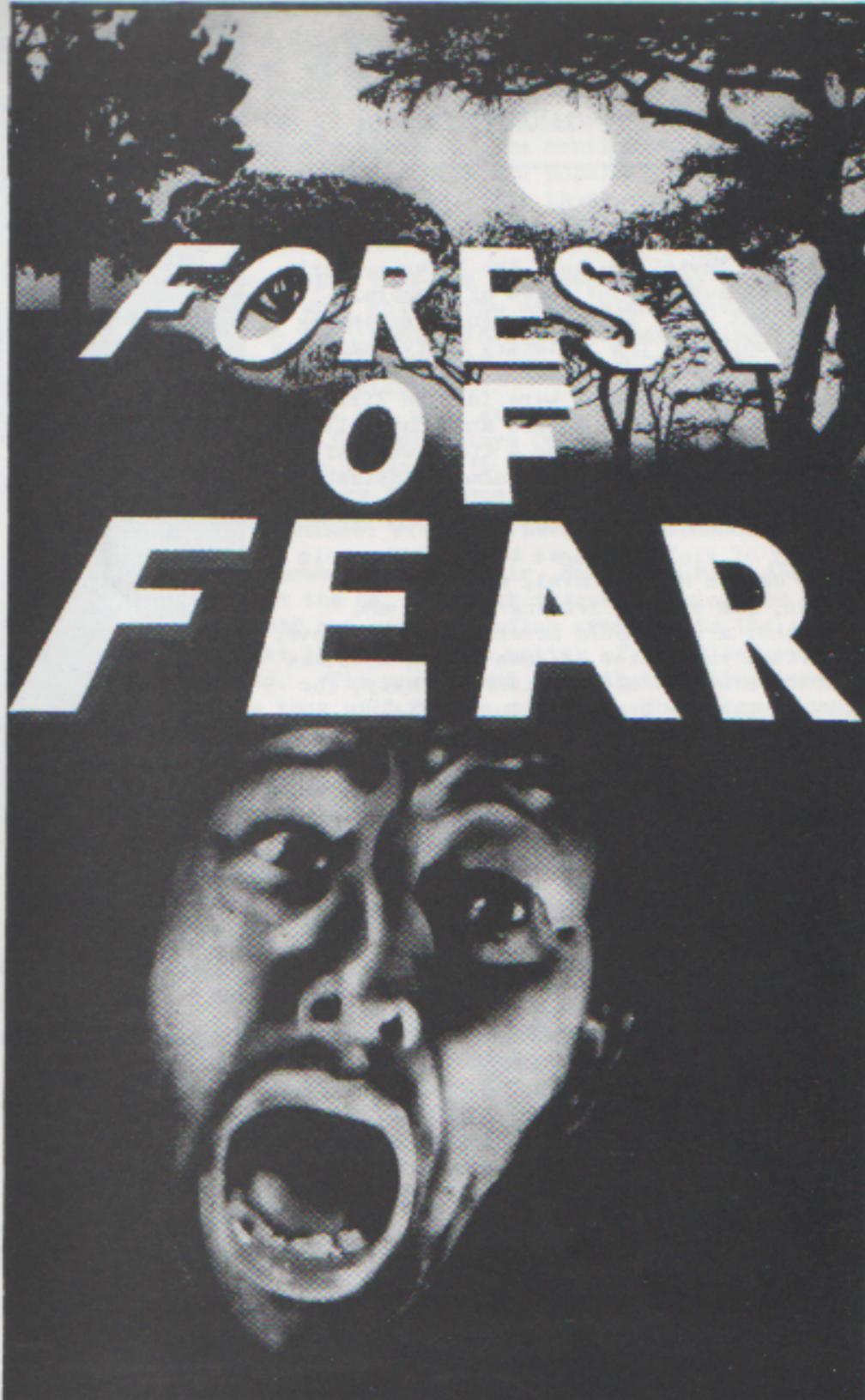
FOR SALE: VHS originals, bargain prices, for example, MANIAC, BASKET CASE; TEXAS CHAINSAW; ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS; BOGEYMAN; HILLS HAVE EYES 2; INVASION OF BLOODFARMERS; 2000 MANIACS etc. JOHN LICHOTA, 1 REDWOOD CLOSE, WATERFORD PARK, RADSTOCK, BATH BA3 3EH.

HORROR VIDEO RENTAL CLUB. Many titles available, nasties; imports; latest releases (uncut) and the totally obscure available for rental. For details of this all-new HORROR SOCIETY, write to J. STANLEY, 13 FONTHILL RD, SOUTHMEAD, BRISTOL, BS10 5SR. Please enclose SAE.

Large collection of VHS originals for sale/swap. SAE for list. GARRY GRANT, 77 SANDBANKS RD, WHITECLIFFE, POOLE, DORSET, BH14 8BT.

WANTED: Japanese fantasy film journal, Japanese Giants, and any other magazine, book or fanzine that includes GODZILLA. Also issues 1 and 3 of SHOCK XPRESS. MAX DELLA MORA, PIAZZA TRIPOLI, 7, 20146, MILANO, ITALY.

VHS originals for sale, including SUSPIRIA (£20), RED NIGHTS OF GESTAPO (£10), WRONG WAY (£8), WITCH WHO CAME FROM SEA (£12), MAUSOLEUM (£8), DEADLY SPAWN (12) etc. SAE for list. PETE WAREING, 41 HOMESTEAD, CLAYTON BROOK, BAMBER BRIDGE, PRESTON, LANCS, PR5 8BB.



and their subsequent banning is an insult to our intelligence.

Most of the remainder of the banned films are obscurities from various countries, that have for some unknown reason been deemed more offensive than any other horror film of their ilk. Who, in all honesty had even heard of NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES; AXE; DON'T GO IN THE WOODS; FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE; MARDI GRAS MASSACRE; ISLAND OF DEATH or NIGHT OF THE DEMON before they were banned? Not too many I suspect, and I should imagine most have now heard of and probably seen them, thanks to a large underground market that has grown up since their banning, as the old 'Jam' record goes "People get what the people want", and anyone wanting to view these, films, and by nature most horror fans are completists anyhow, will do so, either legally or not, it seems to me the most sensible thing to have done was to have left the films legal, thus avoiding all the sleazy underground goings on, and instead to have introduced tighter controls on who can rent out such films, and to let the judgement on children watching stuff, rest with the parents, who surely know the way their kids will react, more than a government ever could?

What does it matter if films are banned?

I'm not here to defend the 39 films in question, I have seen all of them now, and of those 39, I would give about half a dozen above five out of ten if I were to review them in our review section. There is no doubt the majority of the films outlawed are pretty poor efforts, so why care if we can't see them? The answer simply, is once you've drawn up one guideline, it is so easy to extend it, the old snowball principal, who's to say that a member of the so called moral-majority (a term I find so offensive, I think the majority of people in this nation are sick to their back teeth of interferred winge-bags deciding on our behalf what we can or cannot view) who can find something offensive in a piece of shit like BLOODY MOON won't find just as much to offend in an original and highly intelligent film like DAY OF THE DEAD? And herein lies a very disturbing point, for the powers that be seem to have no understanding whatsoever as to what constitutes a good film, remember the difficulties such as

Nasty Novels

Selected by GARETH JAMES.

The video world as we all know has its fair share of the 'nasty' but as we look towards the latest Savini shocker, the literary world is already turning out tales of visceral terror that would send Lucio Fulci screaming for his mother! The 'literary nasty' made its first appearance in the early 70s, these graphic tales of horror were for the first time accessible to the public and what followed could only be described as a tidal wave of carnage, the books becoming almost instant bestsellers. Now, after the talentless one novel gorehounds have moved on, there remains a legacy of violent images that plays a role in the modern horror novel, and when well written, can exude a feeling of fear and dread that a film could never hope to achieve. Below is a short list of some of the notables from the archives of the literary nasty, for those wanting to start off in the field.

THE RATS (James Herbert).

Probably the most acclaimed and well read 'nasty' of the seventies. Herbert's unique style of bloodshed creates some horrific images in a tale of London besieged by killer rodents. I never went near my hamster for weeks afterwards!

DEATHDAY (Shaun Hutson).

Easily the most bloodthirsty author to date, DEATHDAY catalogues atrocity after atrocity, when an evil amulet is discovered by two workmen. Babies in microwave ovens, regular decapitations and dismemberment are all included in Hutson's vomit-inducing retro.

PET SEMETARY (Stephen King).

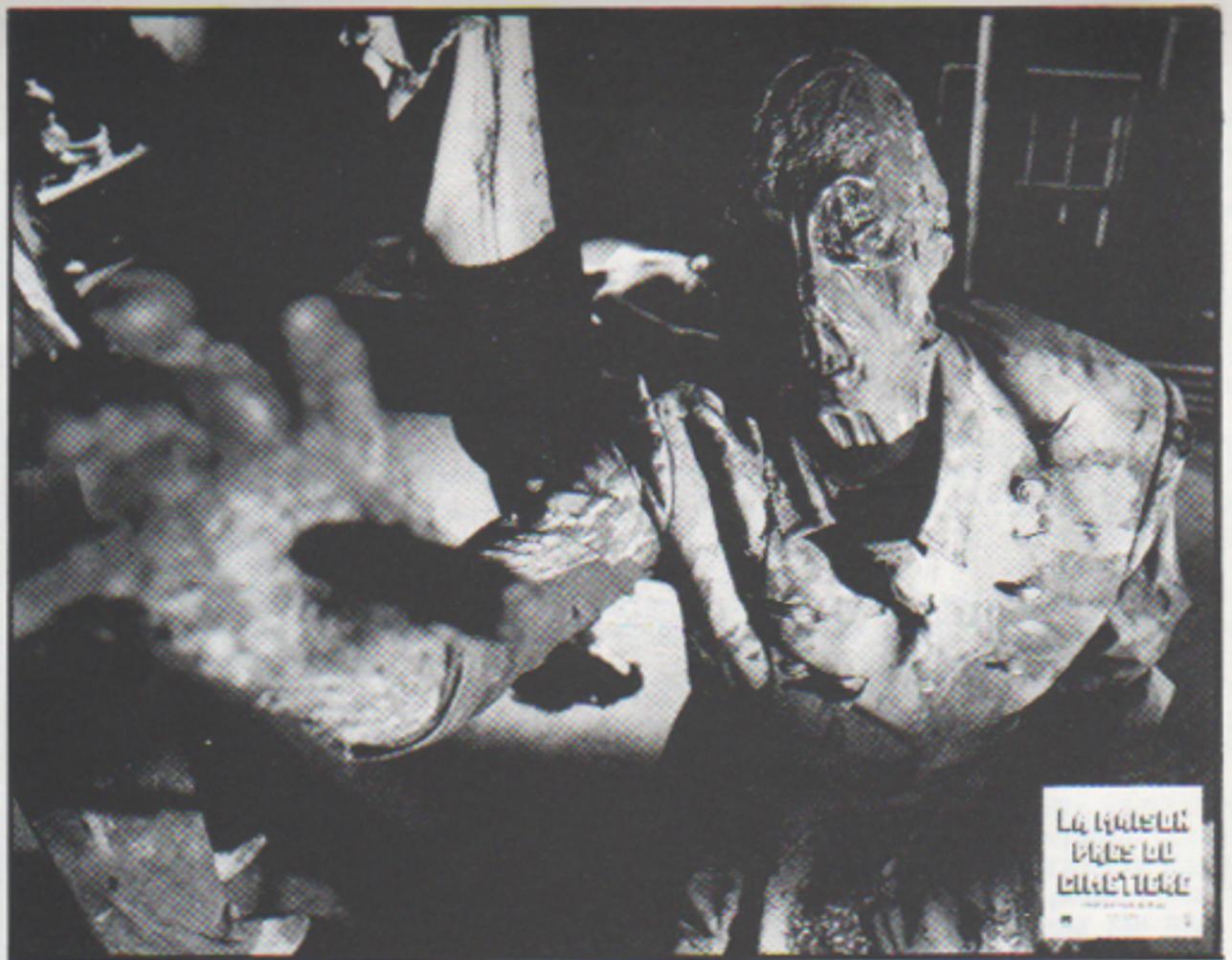
Not a nasty in the sense of graphic horror (although it has its moments) King's novel deserves a mention for the nasty taste it leaves in the mouth once read. A genuine bad dream of events in which one man's love for his family destroys them all. The death of the character 'Cage', a small child, is incredibly sad and numbing.

THE FOG (James Herbert).

With Herbert's second novel, THE FOG, is created a literary classic. A fog which causes people to become murderously insane sweeps across our capitol city in an unqualified nightmare vision causing macabre deaths nearly every page. Herbert's finest novel, placing him as the master of the horror tale.

LET'S GO PLAY AT THE ADAMS (Mendal Johnson).

You won't find any killings in this, but it's a very nasty tale of school children's power and compassionlessness for a young babysitter. Once read it will haunt you for weeks after, very harrowing stuff indeed, physical and mental barbarity I found difficult to contemplate.



▲ REACH OUT...I'LL BE THERE! (HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY).

EVIL DEAD and VIDEODROME had in getting a release? Censorship can, and I'm sorry to say is, spreading like a cancer on our freedom, and the only reason I can say what I have, is because of the freedom of speech, a fundamental policy of democracy, as is freedom to view what one desires, a freedom that no longer exists in the United Kingdom at least. It is a very slippery slope.

The latest developments.

Of late, the whole video nasty debate has been in danger of flaring up again, newspapers have recently carried reports of new laws which allow trading standards officers to search video shops for under the counter films. The new government watchdog committee on violence in film, and particularly television has been formed, headed by Sir William Rees Mogg, which promises yet more interference. And most absurd of all, some bright spark in the cabinet has decided it would be a wonderful idea if a law was brought in to stop people building up video libraries, by attempting to pass a law that would force everybody to erase any recordings made from television after a period of 28 days. This is the most absurd suggestion from a government with some of the most absurd policies ever followed, quite how such a law could be carried out is a mystery, what would happen - groups of police raiding homes to check everyone has taped over the episodes of Eastenders from last month? The mind boggles, and our intelligence should panick that the people who create such policies are in power over our life and future, forget video nasties, that last thought is much scarier.

Quite where it will all end I don't know, and I don't want to know, the further censorship of television continues, and next up would appear to be the horror literature field (which does indeed include fanzines!), we can only pray that someone out there realises the longterm damage that is being created, and on that cheerful note, I'll round off this angry little lecture, and hand you over to other people's opinions, and to coverage of the actual films themselves, which is after all what all this is about. Any opinions you may have about what you've just read, or are about to read, will be received with great interest, what are YOUR views on the 'video nasties' what can you add to the great video nasty debate?



SENSE & CENSORSHIP

THE SUPPRESSION OF TELEVISION & FILM.

The debate surrounding censorship continues to occupy a great deal of attention, partly since it provides easy, sensationalistic copy for the gutter press, with violence on television taking precedence since the killings in Hungerford last year. Following these events the television companies either censored or withdrew a number of their films - BLACK CHRISTMAS; BATTLE-TRUCK; CHRISTINE; THE DEAD ZONE; INDIANA JONES; and even a 60's Steve McQueen western, NEVADA SMITH! The BBC even announced that it would never re-screen FIRST BLOOD, whilst ITV vowed not to show the Clint Eastwood film SUDDEN IMPACT. The list serves to indicate how hard the horror/fantasy genre has been hit. It was in this climate that Panorama made 'Violence on Television. How far has television helped to foster a violent society?', presented by Kate Adie and broadcast on Monday, Feb 15th. The following is an outline of the programme's contents, the coverage of which seems quite valid, considering the effect censorship in general has had on our genre, and the subject matter this issue is devoted to.

The documentary aimed to examine the increased concern about violence on television and discover how this concern has changed the manner in which TV violence is controlled.

HUNGERFORD. Following the killings in Hungerford, the TV companies pulled a number of programmes from their schedules, some local video shops removed some violent cassettes and the press ran false stories about Michael Ryan. They wrote of his fascination with RAMBO and his collection of violent videos, neither existed, Ryan never owned a video recorder and did not even watch much television. But he did belong to both a legitimate gun club and a specialist book club, owning a collection of war books. However, despite these facts, the damage had been done. Hungerford acted as a catalyst for an increase in the debate over violent television.

LEGISLATION. Television will soon be subjected to the Obscenity Law, with juries deciding whether a programme will deprave and corrupt a significant number of likely viewers. However, this has proven a social and legal minefield in the past. There is also to be a new Broadcasting Standards Council, to define tastes and establish standards. But, despite all this action, the government is only acting on assumptions about violence on television.

VIOLENCE IN SOCIETY. Is the relationship between television and violence simply cause and effect? Or is it more complex? For instance domestic violence, the most common form of violence, is rarely depicted on TV. Is it society that is in fact more violent than it was in the past? It is certainly the public perception that life is indeed more violent but, according to Deputy Assistant Commissioner Richard Wells, "Intuitively I feel that this week is more violent than last week but....statistically and empirically I can't prove that."

"I believe that millions of people will watch Miami Vice and will watch RAMBO and will leave it within the safety and the sanity of their living rooms, and don't go out and act that violence on the streets. I think there are other triggers, it may be drink, it may be drugs, it may be elements of a divided society which leads people to violence" - Richard Wells.

TELEVISION VIOLENCE AND THE MEDIA. A recent robbery at a Birmingham bingo hall was, according to newspapers, masterminded by a girl after watching TV. However, the getaway driver's story is that they'd "had a few to drink" and the motivation was a "lack of money" and "boredom". In fact "the television was never on". The aforementioned girl and her family were equally surprised by these stories. There seems to be no truth in such newspaper reports.

MEDIA VIOLENCE AND SOCIETY. "People right across society are very worried about the way society is going and so they look around for scapegoats and easy explanations." - Rev. David Jenkins (Bishop of Durham).

Our lives differ greatly from events portrayed on TV, but does television persuade us that violence is more prevalent today? "I suspect that we're not more violent but we know more about it. We are much more self-conscious" - Rev. Jenkins.

CENSORSHIP. It should be pointed out that violence, actually lies behind sex, bad language, transmission times, boring programmes, and coarse humour in the list of viewer's complaints.

CONCLUSION. "In the future, decisions about violence on the four present British television channels may be resolved by less being shown as a result of pressure, including the threat of the courts, rather than proof about violence."

One notable - and unsurprising - point to emerge from the documentary was that whilst the anti-censorship lobby presented facts and well considered opinions, the pro-censorship group

resorted to the usual emotional ravings. For example, "Eight out of ten programmes show violence or steamy sex scenes" stated a viewer from Birmingham.

"I think the level of violence on television is far too great and ought to be reduced. Now I cannot prove that, but that is the general impression of the overwhelming number of ordinary people." - Paul Johnson (journalist), he continues, "All kinds of things which people should not have are popular, such as drink, drugs, cigarettes and pornography. All these kinds of things society has to control in people's own interests."

"One hopes that the people that are appointed to the Broadcasting Standards Council will not be the usual wishy-washy liberal types that tend to be appointed. This I find appalling that such a tiny minority should dominate." - Tom Wareing (National Viewers and Listeners Association).

A high level of ignorance was also exposed, particularly by the number of people on the following days Open Air, who were surprised to learn that the press don't always bother with facts. We have not progressed very far since the Manchester police seized copies of APOCALYPSE NOW as a video nasty. Such ignorance is frightening.

The most pertinent comment in Open Air, came from Mike Abrams, an American living in the UK. Through discussing violence on TV in this manner the BBC are simply lending credence to the government's argument that this is a matter of great concern and requires controlling. "The government feel that if they keep attacking the media they will become nervous. When they become nervous they become malleable, the point is the consistency of the attack...it will make the BBC start flinching."

A more useful programme would have examined the government's dubious position on censorship. One needs only think of the current debate over Clause 28, the reporting of Spycatcher, the attack on obscene records, the suppression of Channel 4 documentary Fireraiser etc.

Now that is an issue worth real concern.

- DAVID BARRACLOUGH.

(THE PROGRAMME UNDER DISCUSSION DID ENTER INTO FURTHER TOPICS, SUCH AS AMERICAN COP SHOWS; NEWS COVERAGE; SATELLITE AND THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENT PROGRAMMES ON CHILDREN, IT WAS ALSO POINTED OUT FEATURE FILMS POSE A FAR WORSE THREAT ON OUR SANITY THAN TV SHOWS, AND FOR FURTHER COMMENT ON THAT SUBJECT READ THIS ISSUE'S 'CRYPT OF TERROR' IN WHICH GRIFFITHS INVESTIGATES FURTHER THE ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST CENSORSHIP AND THE EFFECT IT HAS HAD ON FILMS, BEARING IN MIND, IT IS CENSORSHIP WHICH GAVE BIRTH TO THE ACTUAL VIDEO NASTIES IN THE FIRST PLACE -ED).

COMMENT

Since the first few video titles were seized back in 1982, I knew we were on our way to total restriction regarding anything that was deemed "unsuitable for adult viewing." We have no say in the matter, whatever protests are made are merely washed aside with accusations of indecency, depravation and so on, and if these laws are broken, the violator suffers a greater penalty than that of someone who commits a mugging!

There are a few blockheads who suggest that because violent videos are easily accessible (which is now a total contradiction) our nation will become an immoral country, they suggest that homicides and sexually related crimes will soar. But these idiots have absolutely no proof or incriminating evidence to suggest that the aforementioned crimes are directly related or even distantly connected with violent movies (in particular horror films). Watching a few Italian actors eat lots of latex does not give any decent self-respecting human the urge to go and eat his fellow man, how can a zombie film possibly influence a murder?

These suggestions are ignored every time. All the government are doing by banning these videos is creating a massive black market (just like in the Soviet Union) for horror fans to obtain the films that they want to see. The films on the nasties list are horror films the same as any other, so why should they be singled out because they are violent? Italy for example, has no film censorship at all, similarly so, Japan, and do you ever hear of huge crime statistics over there? The truth of the matter is, the moral majority (or so we are led to believe) do not like what they see and in their infinite wisdom decide that we also don't want to see it.

Before long, we will reach the thin edge of the wedge, next up is the attack on television, what next - books, magazines, the news? To stop this something must be done, I would like to hear the opinions of any fans out there who feel as strongly as I do, so please write to me at RAW VIRUS, or through the W.S. editorial address, because something has to be done before it is too late.

-NIGE BARTLETT.

CRYPT OF TERROR.

By Richard Griffiths.

WELL HE'S BACK AGAIN, THE MAN WHO SINGLE-HANDEDLY KEEPS THE LETTER'S PAGE GOING! SO HERE IS 'CRYPT OF TERROR PART 3D- THE FINAL BEGINNING.'

"Video nasties, issue 4" John said. That's original I thought, always first with the innovations. "Something on censorship" he continued, "fairly serious". Me? Serious? Well, actually there are very few subjects worth getting serious about. To mis-quote APRIL FOOL'S DAY, "How can you be serious when there's a guy up there with a button that can blow up the world?", Or something. However, if there's one thing that I do value, it's my right to be able to do what I want to do, and when I want to do it. It's called freedom. Of course the problems start when what you want to do is to the detriment of others, and this is what censorship is all about. The protection of the innocent. In the case of film censorship, the innocent are children, and the general public.

Children need to be protected from bad language, violence and sex. Some would argue that 'The Price is Right' should be on that list, and no doubt very convincingly. They need to be protected because they don't understand the context of what they are seeing. This is the only argument for censorship that I agree with...A few years ago, I managed to get hold of a copy of THE EVIL DEAD. Gleefully, I went round to my neighbours to watch it with them. Their six year old daughter was present.

"It's alright" they said, "she watches them all". The fact that she watched the film from behind the sofa, through slitted fingers seemed not to worry them. It worried me. I knew that what I was watching was not real, in fact after the huge build up the film had had, the main thing I noticed was how unconvincing and (somewhat endearingly) amateurish the effects were. However, to a six year old who knew nothing about stop-motion photography; make-up and latex, and would'nt understand about them if she did, all the film depicted was a group of people turning into hideous monsters and killing each other in a lonely house in the woods. Made all the more disturbing for her by the fact we live in a small hamlet in the middle of nowhere. I began to wonder how many other irresponsible parents simply don't care what their children watch. It's a fallacy to say they don't have nightmares about them, as I can testify after watching the cut ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS when I was 13. It scared me rigid, and I found it very difficult to go to sleep for days afterwards. It was years before I dared watch a zombie film again, such a shame it happened to be ZOMBIES LAKE! Now of course, FLESHEATERS is one of my favourite films, and I can sit through an uncut version without flinching, and frequently do. The difference is, now I see the film as a skillful buildup of tension and effects with an over-riding goodtime feeling. The protection of children from such experiences can only effectively be achieved by stricter parental control. Only to allow films that children can watch would be slightly restricting to say the least, and completely unpractical since the majority of films and evening telly programmes could not be shown! Mind you, I'd be perfectly willing if it would get rid of 'Casualty'.

Joe Public also needs to be protected. Apparently, did you know that if you even so much as glance at a few scenes from a horror film that you will immediately go out and commit acts of horrendous violence against your fellow man, copying the scenes you've just viewed in grotesque real-life fantasies? This actually came as quite a surprise to me, though it did explain where all my friends and family had disappeared to over the last few years! Seriously though, this lame argument has been trotted out for years, each time with an increasingly enlightening lack of supporting evidence. It was heartening to see how, though mentioned, this aspect was played down in the Hungerford tragedy. It has at last been realised that is guns weapons and artillery that kill people, not small boxes of magnetic tape. That said, on 31st of March, I did see this cutting in the local rag, the Shropshire "we're not really right wing" Star. This was followed a day later by the Snu. Personally, I find the thought of drinking someone else's blood slightly off-putting, especially with the spectre of AIDS!

So who do we have to censor us? Looking at films, as you do, we've the British Board of Film Classification and the Director of Public Prosecutions, who goes round wielding The Obscene Publications Act in everyone's faces. The BBFC have two jobs, firstly, to certify every film that has a theatrical and video release, and secondly to force censorship down the throats of

Vampire film ban

A video store in Minnesota has stopped renting out The Lost Boys, a film about a gang of teenage vampires, after a murder in which three teenage suspects allegedly licked their victim's blood from their hands. Police said at least one of the teenagers became interested in vampirism after repeatedly watching the video.

VAMPIRE KILLERS LICKED BLOOD

A video nasty about a gang of teenage vampires was blamed yesterday for a murder in which three young men allegedly licked the victim's blood. One of them said he watched the video The Lost Boys repeatedly in Sauk Rapids, Minnesota.

the more imaginative distributors at regular intervals. It's a pity they seem completely incompetent doing either job satisfactorily. I accept and support classification. It is important that people should know what they are going to see. What is unfortunate is that the standards used to certify films fluctuate so wildly and represent so many different factors, they can only be used as an extremely rough guideline. For instance how HOWARD THE DUCK and THE GOLDEN CHILD got PGs is beyond me, just like how TRANCERS and ZONE TROOPERS got a 15 rating alongside CREEPSHOW (bullets in brains etc), when the rereleased CONTAMINATION (no gore, just a name) and CHILLER (a TV movie) get an 18. Occaissionally you'll see them attempt to do their job of re-certifying theatrical releases for video by giving PG films a 15, though this practice does seem a bit ludicrous. If a film is ok for a child to see at the pictures, why not at home? They seem to be accepting the fact that few people care about video certificates, and are cynically going through the motions simply to satisfy the powers that be. My main complaint about their job is with the 18 certificate. Theatrical releases can only be seen by over 18s, it's impossible for children to view them, so a theatrical 18 should be relatively intact, as they often are. This is probably due also to the fact that only major films get theatrical releases over here, and they are infinitely favoured by the BBFC anyway. When re-certified for video, theatrical releases are more often than not released in their theatrical form, any cuts being token. This is no doubt to stop Mr and Mrs Public noticing them and complaining. However, the direct to video releases seem to suffer from excessive censorship, a case of what you don't know, won't hurt you, often destroying their very point of existing (see, or rather don't see THE LAMP). The result of this has meant that the video 18 certificate has come to represent anything from a single bullet in the head (off-screen) to a veritable bloodbath. Of course it's needless to say that the big buck American studios get the prime treatment with little censorship, and the far more interesting European films get the chainsaw treatment. Still, no matter how bad the BBFC is, we can at least rest assured in the knowledge that it is a godsend compared with the American MPAA who force R ratings on everything that wants to make money. Imagine RE-ANIMATOR; FROM BEYOND; DAY OF THE DEAD and EVIL DEAD II rated somewhere between a 15 and an 18. Makes you shudder!

The DPP's input is seemingly redundant now the Video Recordings Act is legal. Since all films must carry a BBFC certificate, they should conform to certain standards. It would, after all, be a bit hypocritical to ban a film with a government approved certificate on it, or would it? TENERRAE, ZOMBIE FLESHEATERS(cut); THE BURNING and HOUSE BY THE CEMETARY were all given certificates by the BBFC, and were all banned, or rather, the suppliers were liable to prosecution. I don't want to get into the debate here, suffice to say that a lot of the films banned were utter rubbish and deserved to be off the shelves. And who brought these films to the attention of the world, thus making them far more popular than they ever were before? None other than our own tabloids, the chief offender being the Daily Mail, always one to jump onto a populist bandwagon. A new terminology was introduced to the English language to describe the films liable to prosecution, a phrase that made righteous parents shudder and draw their children closer, and made the actual viewer curse in rage, and that term was "VIDEO NASTY!" Quite soon, a list of some 55 or so titles was announced as being actual nasties. These immediately became much sought after as people rushed to view the horrendous acts of carnage that lay behind the titles BLOOD FEAST; DRILLER KILLER; S.S. EXPERIMENT CAMP. The titles alone were dispicable enough, so the films...however, it soon became apparent that all was not

well at the DPP camp. Dealers had been prosecuted based on one person's view as to what was obscene, they would then be let off based on another's. Seemingly unjust cases were heard in the courts, with heavy sentences for people dealing with films just seconds longer than "approved" versions. Titles went on and off the list, the most notorious title being THE EVIL DEAD, which as I'm sure you'll remember there was a terrific fuss over as it was branded obscene, then ok, then obscene again. Dealers sweat-ed, software houses panicked and TESE recalled most of their horror stock and remastered it with offensive free material, resulting in a very boring version of SUSPIRIA and putting a very high price on remaining uncut stock, but the most interesting development was yet to come.

In Feb 86, VIM announced "DPP drops four more". Yes, you could now legally see four films that had previously rendered the purveyors liable to jail sentence. Had the law changed? No. Had the films been cut? No. Had VIM made a mistake? No. Had the DPP finally realised that the hysteria and public outcry of a few years back had resulted in some quite absurd decisions? Yes. This surely brought the integrity of the DPP into question and his suitability for the job of censor, after all the films had'nt changed, just the official opinion of them, and if opinion can go one way, it can just as easily go the other. What was needed was some sort of official censor, with legal powers to set firm standards on video, and to keep to them. Of course they already existed-the BBFC. A bill was rushed through the commons which set dates by which films must be certified by, the most important of which was in August 86, when the majority of films in a shop had to be officially certified. Some labels did the honourable thing by certifying their entire back catalogue, but a lot of the films on the shelves belonged to sadly defunct labels. Unable to be recertified, these films were forced to be removed from the shelves and sold off. Or at least that was the theory, as I'm sure you'll find in most video stores, the applaudable practice of self-certification is alive and well, however illegal it may be.

The only other censorship body is the NVLA who, thankfully, have no power whatsoever and nobody takes seriously anymore. Supposedly representing the silent majority, they are in fact a vig-oted minority whose righteous denunciations of everything more adult than SNOW WHITE have led them to become an increasing object of mirth from all sides. Captured in Oink! as Mary Light-house, and viz as Mary Shitehouse, Ms W has been remarkably quiet of late, no doubt dealing with all those in-family scandals that such people tend to incur. Justice is always served.

Actually, a couple of years on from the V.R.A., it is obvious to say, with smug hindsight, it was a good idea. Video has cleared its image, the public are satisfied, and practically everything gets a release, all legally and above-board, or above-counter as the case may be. There are actually signs that the BBFC are getting more lenient now the public pressure is off them. What is unfortunate is that the pressure that was on video has now been switched to TV. This is potentially a lot more controversial since video was young and defenceless when it was attacked, so not many people cared about the removal of films from the shelves. Everyone, however, watches television, and everyone has their favourite shows. It is particularly amusing to read letters in the tabloids which start off "I think it is appalling the violence shown on TV these days" yet end with "...but to cancel episodes of my favourite show MIAMI VICE is ridiculous and irritating!" These people only seem to complain about programmes they don't watch, not realising that if one goes, they all must go. The same arguments are being raked over for TV censorship as for video a few years ago. However, their novelty value has worn a bit thin of late, after all, nobody did find a direct link between the Zeebrugge Ferry disaster and that terrific slaughter film THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE, although I suspect a few of the passengers had seen it and unwittingly rolled the ferry.

It is of course redundant to say that films on TV are a complete waste of time, ITV being the worst offender by far. Often master-imp from American TV versions they remove all dodgy language and sometimes replace whole scenes with banal dialogue. Anyone unfortunate to view GHOSTBUSTERS last Christmas will readily testify how such un-necessary interference can destroy a film. Interestingly, it is only the bad language that is removed, somewhat hypocritically bearing in mind a lot of what is broadcast. THE THING for instance, was complete with bursting dogs; chesty mouths and walking heads.

I'm not going to repeat what has already been gone into in great detail about the double standards in the media concerning violence in films and violence in their own news coverage, but I will dwell on one subject. Although the papers like to show strong links between what people see, and what they do, it did'nt put them off full and wholly glorifying coverage of Hungerford, advertising to any waiting gun-freak that fame may just be a trigger away. (Come on Richard, I think you're assuming that people who buy such tabloids can actually read! -Ed) To be honest I can't think of any horror fan I know who's obsessed by artillery, and conversely, one friend who is heavily into military weapons can't bear to watch horror films....maybe I should avoid him in the future?

There is one last point I'd like to make and I feel it is the most important point of all, and one that I frequently use to shut

people up when they attack horror films. I like to think that I have a very clear perception of reality, apart from Friday nights that is when I find the carpet dragon makes excellent conversation but I digress, I know what is right in this world, and what is wrong, and can discuss at length issues of conscience and morals at intelligent levels. My argument is this, films, are not real, they are fiction, works of imagination, thought up by often very nice, respectable people who have a job to do. They have not actually happened, and are not about to happen, they are escapist, fantasy, and there is no doubt about that. They are not to be taken seriously, and not to be believed. If MPs; NVLA members and moral crusaders cannot accept that fact, then maybe it is they who should be worried about. Maybe they are the ones who confuse fiction with reality and in their attempts to cover up their own inadequacies they feel they should drag everyone else down as well. It's just a thought, but everyone I've written to, read about and seen connected with the horror genre seem to be really nice, intelligent people, whereas the likes of Whitehouse are obviously interfering old bags with some axe to grind which she does to everyone's irritation.

I certainly know who I like to be associated with.



THIS IS BAD FOR YOU? - 'THE EVIL DEAD'.

NEXT ISSUE: Richard dons his nun's outfit and heads off in the search of THE SOUND OF MUSIC, as he begins his year long stay in the general region of Switzerland, where he'll be dieting on a mixture of uncut carnage and cheap beer! The next bunch of CRYPT's will therefore have an International flavour, and quite possibly a series of photos of Richard standing alongside the sites of some of the most famous ski-ing disasters of recent years! Be here!

HORROR MARKET

FOR SALE: Horror and general film posters, including FRIDAY THE 13TH V; THE GATE; EVIL DEAD II; DEMON OF PARADISE etc. SAE for lists to: MARK STEVENS, 141 MONTAGUE RD, RUGBY, WARWICKS, CV22 6LQ.

VHS ORIGINALS FOR SALE, Many titles to choose from, prices start at £5.00. Enclose SAE. M.KEENAN, 3 PINFOLD CLOSE, COCKERMOUTH, CUMBRIA, CA13 9JW.

FOR SALE: VHS originals. ZOMBIE HOLOCAUST (£15), DAWN OF THE MUMMY (£15), TEXAS CHAINSAW (U/C) (£30), EVIL DEAD (X certificate) (£75). JOE DESANTIS, 8 CHAPEL LANE, STANION, KETTERING, NORTHANTS, NN14 1BZ.

FOR SALE: Horror/sci-fi magazines/fanzines, including Fangoria, Cinefantastique and Starburst. SAE for list. ROGER BIRCHALL, 3(a) THISTLEWAITE RD, CLAPTON, LONDON E5 0QG.

WANTED: VHS original of POOR WHITE TRASH. LES GALE, 43 HORNBEAM CRESC, BRENTFORD, MIDDXX, TW8 8NE.

WANTED: Any rare, unusual 50s sci-fi monster movies, also a copy of the John Waters book SHOCK VALUE. NICK CAIRNS, 29 WESTLAND AVE, HUCKNALL, NOTTINGHAM, NG15 6FW.

WANTED: VHS originals only of CREEPSHOW, CRAZIES, KNIGHTRIDERS, MARTIN, TEXAS CHAINSAW, DREAMSCAPE, ZOMBIE FLESHTEATERS etc. Write: DAVID BROCK, 52 FARCROFT DRIVE, MARKET DRAYTON, SHROPSHIRE, TF9 3HB.