

TITLE:LA DOLCE VITA

DATE:12.5.89

FILM☐

VIDEO☒

DISTRIBUTOR:PALACE

FIRST☒

RESUB☐

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:ITALY

CATEGORY:'15'

CUTS☐

NO CUTS☒

GENRE:SOCIAL CRITICISM/DRAMA

ENGLISH LANGUAGE☐

SUB-TITLED☒

DUBBED☐

FOR BOARD DISCUSSION☐

APPROPRIATE CATEGORY:		Uc	U	PG	15	18	R18	CUTS	REJECT
THEME					✓				
TREATMENT					✓				
VISUALS:	NUDITY			✓					
	SEX								
	VIOLENCE			✓					
	HORROR				✓	suicide			
LANGUAGE					✓	sexual references			
DRUGS									
CRIMINAL TECHNIQUES									
LEGALITY:	OBSCENITY								
	CHILDREN								
	ANIMALS								
	BLASPHEMY								
FILM AS A WHOLE					✓				

SYNOPSIS AND COMMENTS:

Keywords: SOCIAL, SATIRE, MEDIA, RELIGION, SEXUAL REFERENCES, SUICIDE.

Synopsis on file.

It's strange to think the film was once thought so scandalous. I still think its insights and truths hold good today, but the restraint with which Fellini shoots the film still manages to deliver an authentic 'frisson' of horror. Mastroianni has never been better. Visually the piece is virtually 'PG', which is to say that there is very little that on its own could not pass at that category. What gives the visuals edge is the air of degeneracy, lack of hope, vivacious emptiness which informs and guides the lives of the participants. Thus Emma's attempt at suicide, being motiveless at that point in the film (18.51) feels '15'. So, too, does the sequence in which Maddalena invites a whore to take her and Marcello to the whore's apartment for coffee. The couple stay the night, pay the whore the morning after and drive off (11.05 onwards). Visually discreet, even verbally so - but it feels '15'. Similarly, Steiner's suicide (2.18.01), whose aftermath only we see, feels '15', while the final party, which includes Nadia Gray's famous striptease

over

number, with a flash in very long shot of breasts (2.32.50), plus the gay element, probably finally pushes the piece firmly into '15'. Perhaps the wonderfully played scene between Emma and Marcello in and around his car in a bleak suburb crystallises the film's/tape's category level, for it is a thoroughly adult moment, fraught and painful in which two people emotionally savage each other (2.15.20). This is adult material, presented by a wise and insightful adult for adults and, while there is nothing in the scene which in verbal and visual terms could not pass at 'PG', '15' seems the level at which an audience, at the lowest age level, might actually appreciate the subtexts, ironies and emotional thrust of this complex tragi-comedy. This is a great film which I have been moved by and laughed during yet again, after almost 30-years! '15' uncut for me.

'15'.

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SYNOPSIS AND COMMENTS:

Keywords: SUICIDE, STRIPTEASE.

Passed 'X' in 1960 and re-classified '15' in 1987 by MHB and MAM for the theatrical release. The publicity 'X' carried by the film poster provoked a proper if poorly informed letter of complaint from one viewer. In his excellent and thought-provoking report on the film version, MHB provides cogent and lucid arguments as to why, despite its adult theme, the film should be '15' and those reasons hold equally for the video. Needless to say the smaller screen in no way diminishes the film's power. The images and narrative accompanying the 'problem' scenes while too strong for a general audience but lack the degree of explicitness of '18'. They are:

1

the unexplained suicide attempt by Emma(18½ mins);

2

the row between Emma and Marcello culminating in blows (136);

3

the scene in which the police rummage through the apartment in which Steiner has just committed suicide after shooting both his children (138);

over

4 striptease by Nadia at the finale (152).
Passed '15' uncut.

MEMORANDUM

To:

From:

Date:

Subject:

Ken's reply to the London Evening Standard 12/10/87

J F Sweeney's is quite right in suggesting that the film LA DOLCE VITA should now be classified '15' rather than '18'.

It was originally passed in the 'X' category in 1960 when the age bar was 16. Our examiners have seen the film again and consider that '15' is the appropriate category by current standards. Although the existing advertising states '18', teenagers over the age of '15' will be allowed into the cinema.