

**TITLE:** DAY OF THE DEAD **DATE** 18 4 86 **FILM** ☒ **VIDEO** ☐

**DISTRIBUTOR:** EFD **FIRST** ☒ **RESUB** ☐

**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:** USA **CATEGORY:** 18 **CUTS** ☒ **NO CUTS** ☐

**GENRE:** HORROR

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE** ☒ **SUB-TITLED** ☐ **DUBBED** ☐ **FOR BOARD DISCUSSION** ☐

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

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**SYNOPSIS AND COMMENTS:**

Keywords: Cannibalism, zombies, splatter, macho values, mutilation.

A very interesting film that spoils itself for me by going over the top towards the end - Tom Savini finally takes over entirely from Romero, the characters disappear and the last scene loses all resonance as a result.

There are two problems with this as with most zombie films:

1) Are the zombies really living dead or are they just stand-ins for foreigners, Vietnamese, Russians, Libyans or whoever is the mad dog of the moment? Are we therefore condoning blood lust to a degree we would never countenance in other types of film? There can be no final answer to this question, but I didn't feel that Romero was trying to make us identify with the wiping out of creatures whether alive or dead. The sympathetic zombie, Bub, survives and all the killing is self-defence.

over....

2) Cannibalism. Here we have always been cautious and more so since the Video Recordings Bill when it appeared that, officially at least, the eating of human flesh has a particular horror for the 'public'. I can't understand why, but must respect that we have to conform with this. A third area, not necessarily specific to zombie films, is the violence perpetrated to the human characters both by other humans and by the less than human. The really gory bits seem to me to be so far beyond reality that they demand a totally different response to 'usual' violence. These scenes are constructed simply for the technicians to 'astonish us' and convince us that what we are seeing is 'real' when we know it is not. As such I believe that such scenes do deserve a licence to dismember. There is, not usually, room for real sadism in the presentation which is often semi-comic rather than truly horrific.

That said my cuts would be:

a) The second shot of the spade through the neck in reel 4, if only to be consistent with the similar cut in 'Re-Animator'. There is a sadistic feel to this particular shot up at the man with the spade pushing hard into the neck of what might be only a zombie but still leaves an image of cruelty. The first and third shots are fine.

b) In reel 5, I would perhaps reduce the pulling apart of the face of the bearded soldier on similar grounds, though I feel less strongly about this.

Perhaps one of the two shots could be removed to lessen the impact, though the more I think about this the less convinced I become.

c) The killing of Rhodes seemed to me splendidly ludicrous with his head still chatting away long after his trousers and what they contained had been removed to another part of the lab. The subsequent eating of his various entrails I did not much relish but would hardly cut were it not for our policy and precedent on this sort of dining behaviour. On these grounds I would have thought that the whole series of shots would have to go. I don't personally think it would damage the picture much though this is not exactly a conviction cut.

I would reserve my opinion about how to respond on video until having seen the film in that medium. I watched 'The Thing' on TV recently and discovered that what had terrified me twice in the cinema had no impact at all on the narrow, small screen with its feeble sound. My wife who is notoriously squeamish about horror actually laughed all the way through so ...

In summary two (at most three) cuts.

2) Cannibalism. I ...

CUTS

9th May 1986

DAY OF THE DEAD

Media Releasing Distributors

Proposed category: '18'

Reel 3 When arm is being amputated by heroine, remove second cut as she leans on knife.

Reel 4 When zombie's head is cut off by spade, remove second shot of spade cutting through the neck.

- Reel 5
- (a) Reduce scene in which soldiers are ripped apart by zombies, removing close shots of eyeballs being gouged and fingers chewed.
  - (b) Considerably reduce the tearing apart and eating of the body of Captain Rhodes by the zombies (separation of body may remain).

RESUBMIT whole film.

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**GENRE:** ZOMBIE HORROR FILM  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE** ☒ **SUB-TITLED** ☐ **DUBBED** ☐ **FOR BOARD DISCUSSION** ☐

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BLASPHEMY								
FILM AS A WHOLE					✓			

**SYNOPSIS AND COMMENTS:**

Synopsis on File.

DAY OF THE DEAD was seen originally by T and H who tentatively suggested passing it with no cuts. It was then seen in a large group viewing and a series of minimal cuts were agreed due to Board Policy concerning repetition of blows and prurient interest in the process of violence. I can't help feeling it is a pity that Romero's third zombie movie has been cut, however slightly, as this is the most mainstream of the series, complete with lengthy exposition to stress the fantasy nature of the horror/splatter sequences, well characterised and performed identification figures and the most upbeat ending of any zombie/cannibal film I have seen. The significance of this move for Romero, apart from the availability of budgets which allows for the hiring of make-up "superstars" like Tom Savini, rests in the current popular acceptance and recognition of "zombies" as

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popular horror figures. If this seems far-fetched in the light of the DPP's concern with this sub-genre, then we have only to consider the Michael Jackson pop video for THRILLER, and the recent spate of Zombie spoof movies (HARD ROCK ZOMBIES etc.). To DAY OF THE DEAD's credit, it isn't a spoof, but is almost a return to traditional monster film, part of whose appeal was identification with the monster (the "Bub" character here) and a fantasy stylisation which provided a suitable distance from real-life horror. Even the extremely gory effects are effectively contextualised by this approach and this successful mixture of the traditional pleasures of the horror film and the undeniable and spectacular pleasure of prosthetic special effects, made almost aesthetic, albeit squeam-inducing, by technicians such as Savini should, I think, have been respected by the Board, particularly when the cuts make no difference to a presumed "level" of "gore" or violence. In the light of THE THING and OMEN II, (with its Tom Savini orchestrated bisecting of a man in a lift), having been shown on TV with little complaint, I cannot imagine that this film will draw much complaint from the public.

Passed '18' without further cuts.