

MAD MAX

Distributed by Columbia-EMI-Warner  
Distributors Limited

Category: 'X'

Cuts: 49 seconds

Footage: 8,169 feet

Country of origin: Australia

Running time: 91 minutes

A chilling futuristic fantasy set, as the opening caption tells us, "a few years from now," in an anonymous wasteland of roadways peopled by ruthless, dehumanised gangs hunted relentlessly by the Main Force Patrol of highway police. One such patrol car, driven by Max Rockatansky (Mel Gibson), chases the psychotic Nightrider and his girlfriend down "Anarchie Road" to their deaths in a spectacular crash into the back of a petrol tanker. The surviving members of the gang, led by the vicious Toecutter, arrive to collect Nightrider's body at the railway station and casually terrorise the innocent bystanders, in particular a young couple whose car they pursue on their bikes. Policeman Jim Goose finds the aftermath of their sport: a raped girl in a catatonic state chained to a gang member called Johnny the Boy, while her bruised and bloodied boyfriend flees across the fields in terror. Goose arrests Johnny, now senseless with drugs, but later attempts to beat him up when he is released for lack of evidence. This marks out Goose as an enemy of the gang, and he is eventually burned to death in his own upturned car. Sickened by his friend's fate and by the violence the police must employ to counter such terror, Max resigns and goes on extended leave with his wife, Jess, and their baby. During the course of their holiday, Jess happens upon Toecutter and flees after a confrontation. The gang pursue her along the highway and, despite Max's precautions, succeed in running her down, killing the baby outright and leaving Jess a vegetable. Appalled, Max puts on his uniform again and sets out to exact his own dreadful and ruthless revenge.

Made in Australia by a former doctor, George Miller, new to feature films, this latest example of the horror-and-revenge fantasy astonished many at the 1979 Cannes Film Festival with its technical virtuosity. The impression of extreme violence is achieved largely through spectacular effects and brilliant stuntwork, with most of the visible damage done to objects rather than to people. The scenes in which menace actually leads to personal attack are all the more effective for their rarity, but few of them could have been passed in any but the adult category. Indeed, one of these scenes required a substantial cut, since the gang's terrorising of the young couple whose car they have forced off the road seemed excessive, and a dangerous model of violent behaviour to offer to the sort of audience who might find themselves attracted to this sort of entertainment.

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Cuts:

Reel 2

Reduce to absolute minimum smashing up of car and terrorising of young couple who are trapped in it. (Delete all destructive violence which occurs after the gang break in the window, resuming on the bird hovering overhead).



Title: MAD MAX

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Film: First: X English lang: X

Video: X 2nd/3rd: Foreign language:

Sub TV: Resub: Sub-titled/Dubbed:

INITIAL CATEGORY '18' SUGGESTION	CLASSIFICATION ISSUES TERRORISATION							
	OUTLINE							
CATEGORY & CUTS	Uc	U	PG	12	15	18	R18	CUTS/REMARKS
THEME					X			
TREATMENT						X		
VISUALS: NUDITY								
SEX					X			
VIOLENCE						X		
SEXUAL VIOL								
HORROR								
LANGUAGE					X			
DRUGS								
IMITABLE TECHNIQUES								
LEGALITY: OBSCENITY								
CHILDREN								
ANIMALS								
BLASPHEMY								
FILM AS A WHOLE						X		

Keywords: FUTURE, REVENGE, POLICE DRAMA, YOUTH

SYNOPSIS ON FILE

#### COMMENTS

Greatly improved with the original voices. It will be even more improved by laying off cutting this, as there are no strong arguments against what is in this tape in toto. Highs there are, but nothing that goes beyond showing the bad guys in their true colours and the need for Max's (Mel Gibson) response. Thus, the high previously cut, it seems,

At 24.50 The motorcycle thugs do a vigorous and superbly cut demolition job on the young couple's car. Hatchets of steel, iron bars, and spikes ensure it becomes a total non-runner. The man and the woman inside it cower and shriek, and are then each dragged out through their side windows. Later,



At 26.50 A long shot shows a man with a bloody arse running away through a cornfield as Max and Jim Goose (Steve Bisley) come upon the scene. Then, at 27.50, the woman is seen, underwear intact, cowering with a metal chain round her neck like a dog. Jim carries her to the cop car.

The whole scenario makes this the highest point(s) of the work: both the man and the woman have probably been raped, though only the man shows physical evidence of this. During the attack, physical threat by means of the implacable attack on the car while the couple are still inside carries force due to the shots from inside from their point of view while windows etc are smashed. However, none of this strays into territory of sexual titillation, since it is only by inference and not explicitly that the viewer would 'know' that rapes had occurred. DEATH WISH this is most definitely not.

The other highs are broadly as suggested by the film reports way back in 1979, but only go to confirm the '18' (in most cases, but not all), though in this case, the authentic Strine version, the appropriate category is '18' uncut.