

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR DECISION

Under the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 (FVPC Act)

HEADNOTE

Title of publication:	The Cabin In The Woods
Other known title(s):	Not stated
OFLC ref:	1200417.000
Medium:	Film
Classification:	Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 16 years.
Descriptive note:	Violence, horror, drug use and offensive language
Display conditions:	None

The film is from the United States and has a running time of 94 min 52 sec. It will screen as part of the 2012 NZ International Film Festival.

The Cabin In The Woods is a genre-bending horror film about five friends holidaying in a remote cabin who unwittingly find themselves caught up in an ancient ritual presided over by a high-tech government agency. The friends' attempts to escape are in vain, and they start to get killed off by a "zombie redneck torture family" known as the Buckners. The surviving friends investigate and discover a supernatural conspiracy with global implications.

The publication deals briefly with matters of sex. A young woman, Jules, performs an erotic dance in front of her friends. She is mildly sexualised by the camera's framing and focus on her buttocks and thighs. Soon afterwards, Jules and her boyfriend Kurt venture outside and prepare to have sex in the forest. They are watched via hidden cameras by a roomful of people. As Jules starts to remove her clothes one of them remarks, "ok baby let's see some boobies." Jules removes her top. Her breasts are briefly visible before she and Kurt are attacked by the Buckners.

The publication deals with matters of horror, cruelty and violence in terms of s3(1) of the FVPC Act. The friends accidentally summon forth the Buckners when one of them reads a Latin phrase from a diary that details the family's gruesome demise. The Buckners emerge from the earth as hideous, disfigured zombies. One of them carries an iron bear trap which he flings at victims' backs. Later in the film numerous other monstrous creatures are introduced, including a werewolf, a giant cobra, a little girl whose face is a gaping maw, and a man with metal circular saws protruding from his head. While humour tends to reduce the impact of the horror there are still some very effective moments of suspense followed by a person's grisly demise.

The publication also deals with matters of crime through the character of Marty, a "stoner", whose constant state of being high allows him to grasp from an early stage that the friends are being manipulated by an unknown party. Marty is shown rolling joints and smoking marijuana through a large collapsible bong which, on two occasions, becomes a useful weapon. His laid

back stoner demeanour is mined for comic effect and forms a large part of his character identity. The other characters do not smoke drugs, and the film does not promote, glamorise or encourage the use of drugs in a wider sense.

The publication does not promote or support, or tend to promote or support, any s3(2) matters.

Under s3(3)(a)(i) the film extensively depicts the infliction of serious physical harm and acts of significant cruelty. One of the Buckners stabs Jules through the hand with a knife and then holds her in place while another zombie kills her with a large tree saw. The camera cuts away the moment the saw comes near her exposed stomach, instead showing just a spray of blood through the air. Soon afterwards, Jules' severed head is tossed inside the cabin to terrify her friends. Kurt, the jock, is killed when he tries to jump across a chasm on motorbike. He slams into an invisible force field and plummets down a steep ravine. Another of the friends is killed when a zombie stabs him in the neck with a scythe. Dana, the survivor (or "final female" in the parlance of horror films) stabs a zombie repeatedly in the neck and chest. Later she is savaged by a werewolf and left with deep cuts across her body.

The film's third act culminates in a fury of bloodletting when Dana deliberately unleashes a horde of monstrous creatures upon the agency responsible for administering the ritual sacrifice of her friends. A squad of heavily armed soldiers are quickly reduced to body parts and blood by a bizarre amalgam of creatures, some genuinely frightful in appearance, others, such as the unicorn and a "merman", less so. Chaos reigns as the monsters rampage through the government facility. There are numerous shots of people being savaged and stabbed and eaten alive. The mayhem results in rooms being covered in blood.

Under s3A the publication contains highly offensive language. The word "fuck" is used fairly frequently, both to insult and for emphasis. If emulated the language would cause serious harms such as alienation or intimidation.

The publication's dominant effect is a comedy horror that references and pays homage to classic horror films such as *The Evil Dead* and the *Friday The 13th* series (among many others) while affectionately sending up conventions of the genre.

The unrestricted availability of this publication is likely to be injurious to the public good given the manner in which it deals with matters of horror, crime, cruelty, violence and offensive language. Young teenagers and children would be frightened, shocked and disturbed by the violence and depictions of zombies and other creatures. Older teenagers and adults have the maturity and experience to place the material in the context of a fictional horror contrived as entertainment. The drug use also points to an older intended audience. Likelihood of injury to the public good is reduced by restricting the publication to persons 16 years and over.

Note:

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