

WRITTEN REASONS FOR DECISION SECTION 12

HEADNOTE

Type of Publication:	Film 35mm
Title of Publication:	300
Other known title:	Three Hundred; Frank Miller's 300
OFLC Publication Reference No:	700383
Decision:	Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 16 years.
Display Conditions:	Nil.
Descriptive Note:	Graphic violence.

300 is classified as objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 16 years primarily because of its treatment of sex and violence.

The publication is a 35mm film in English with a running time of 117 min 38 sec. The film is a heavily stylised and faithful filmic adaptation of Frank Miller's graphic novel of the same name. Set in 480 BCE the kingdom of Sparta finds itself threatened by the god-king Xerxes and his rapacious Persian empire. Leonidas, King of the Spartans, refuses to pay obeisance, and against the orders of Sparta's corrupt political and religious elders leads an army of 300 against the million-strong Persian army. At the Hot Gates of Thermopylae, a narrow cliff pass providing the only entrance to Sparta, the 300 repel the invading hordes. Meanwhile Leonidas' wife Queen Gorgo attempts to convince the ruling council to send reinforcements despite opposition from the evil politician Theron. Leonidas is eventually betrayed by Ephialtes, a disfigured Spartan warrior angry at being denied permission by Leonidas to fight alongside the 300. Ephialtes leads the Persian forces to an alternative route around the cliff pass where the army surround Leonidas and his remaining forces. Leonidas is defeated in a volley of arrows. The epilogue tells of forthcoming victory when the entire Spartan army is roused to defend themselves against the Persian forces.

The publication deals with matters of sex in terms of s3(1) of the FVPC Act. After Leonidas is rebuffed by Sparta's priests, who urge him not to take action against Xerxes, he goes to seek solace from Queen Gorgo. The couple's lovemaking is shown in a black and white, slow-motion montage sequence. Shots of Queen Gorgo's breasts, the couple's bare backs and thighs comprise most of the images shown. The sexual activity remains simulated rather than explicitly depicted.

Sexual imagery is also used in the scene beforehand when the priests consult the oracle, a beautiful young woman dressed in a white see-through shawl that slips down to reveal her

breasts while she writhes about in a sensual manner. The voiceover references the oracle's submissive role as a sex slave, yielding to the priests' "needs of men" when one of the priests leeringly puts his face up to the oracle's.

The publication deals extensively with matters of violence. The infliction of serious physical harm is discussed under s3(3)(a)(i) and sexual coercion under s3(3)(a)(ii). The publication does not deal with any s3(2) matters.

In terms of s3(3)(a)(i) the film contains extensive depictions of the infliction of serious physical harm. The bulk of the film centres around Leonidas and his battalion of loyal Spartan soldiers stopping the Persian army gaining access to Sparta. Spectacular battle sequences take place within the confined rocky space of a cliff-top pass overlooking the sea. The action sequences are slowed down and then sped up, giving the sense that the Spartan warriors move much faster than their opponents. The rawness and brutality of the battle scenes, comprising the repeated skewering of torsos, stabbing of eyes, and heads and limbs severed in great plumes of blood, is juxtaposed against the balletic and graceful displays of superior swordsmanship displayed by the Spartans. In one scene that borders on the humorous Spartan soldiers are shown blithely executing fallen Persian army soldiers while casually conversing among themselves. The bodies are then piled high to form an enormous wall of corpses to intimidate the enemy.

The film contains one scene that deals with sexual coercion (s3(3)(a)(ii)). Queen Gorgo is visited at her home by counsellor Theron. He promises to support her plea to the Senate for reinforcements on the condition that she engage in sex with him. Queen Gorgo tacitly acquiesces to Theron's demand by removing her shirt, whereupon Theron turns her around and holds her against a wall. Theron leans against Queen Gorgo and says to her "this will not be over quickly. You will not enjoy this". The scene ends before depicting any sexual activity.

The dominant effect of the publication as a whole is of a stylish and visually arresting adaptation of a graphic novel.

The unrestricted availability of this publication would be injurious to the public good given the manner in which it deals with matters of sex and violence. Weighting has been given to the depictions of serious physical harm which would be potentially disturbing to young viewers. The film's exciting and glamorous portrayal of graphic violence is also likely to have the effect of desensitising younger audiences to violence in general, who are less able to place this material within its historic and artistic context. Likelihood of injury to the public good is avoided by restricting this publication to audiences that have attained the age of 16 years.

Written reasons are not legally required for section 12 submissions, but it is the policy of the Classification Office to provide them.

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Date	08/03/07	OPIC Ref	700383
Applicant	PULP		
Applicant to Labelling Body	Paddock		
Title (On Screen)	300		
Other Known Title	Three Hundred; Frank Miller's 300		
Director/s	Zack Snyder		
Producer/s	Mark Canton, et al		
System Format	Film 35mm	Country of Origin	USA
Language/s	English		

Classification	
R16	
Descriptive Note	
Graphic violence	
Revisions/s	Date Cleared
N/A	N/A
Total Running Time	Total Running Time after Exclusions
117.38	N/A

Leonidas (2)

00:00 Feature starts

1:05 Man holding baby in air. VO about boy discarded if unhealthy.

2:20 Age 7 boy takes 4 taught to fight punching boy in the in 16-20.

4:00 Boy facing wolf

6:20 Man addressing warriors around fire

9:30 Person emitting meets L. Also to take of admiral

13:00 Person thrown down well,

14:40 L. goes of nation to priests

17:15 Consulting the oracle. Half naked woman writing in sb-mo; mention mode of the priests' needs of her

20:50 L. talking w/ wife seeking Solace

22:40 L. & wife have making Pure breasts, sb-mo mortgage in black ~ white

24:40 Senate falls L. not to organize

27:20 L. meets a joining army

30:20 L. sees ruined city. Wounded by stumbles over

33:20 See tree of bodies

36:00 Counselor goes to see Over. Arranges for her to speak to Senate



38:15 "Move!" Commissary arrives. Shots of spikes protruding from mountain wall made of stones & bodies.

40:30 S. say Waver, gas etc w/ be slaves

45:00 P. Army marching out. Meet Spartans.

47:00 Fighting begins

50:15 Soldier tumble over cliff.

53:00 Bodies piled w/ swords. VO.

56:30 Spartans many blitly than fallen soldiers stabbing

58:00 Xerxes cores face to face w/ L.

1:01:00 L. standing up to Xerxes, Persian bodies piled high

- 1:43:10 The Linnell write
- 1:06:00 Big warrior beast attacks. Started in eye lead
- 1:10:30 Rampaging rhinoceros beast charges Spartans.
- 1:12:45 Several head riffs in sb-no into an
- 1:15:00 Son's head cut off by warrior on horseback
Captain goes "Blood drink"
- 1:17:10 Inside Xerxes' den. Winking bodies, distorted
Soldier kneels
- 1:20:00 C. Wife offers water to Spartan Asks for hot sweat.
He pours Queen backward, hand over neck
- 1:22:40 "This w/ not be our guilty. You will not enjoy this".
Queen turned around facing him, implied rape
- 1:24:00 L. named hunchback betrayed Spartans by leading ?
army behind their position
- 1:28:20 L. gives message to soldier to tell Council
- 1:30:10 Queen about to address Council Asks them to
send supporting army.
- 1:33:00 Queen accused of having attempted to bribe Spartan.
Capt for a "more Queen". Queen stabs him
- 1:36:00 L. being told to head to Xerxes
- 1:38:25 L. speed, appears to be thinking Disarms
- 1:41:10 Spear flying in sb-no towards Xerxes
- 1:44:15 Arrows fly towards L.
- 1:47:00 Narrator revealed to be messenger, addressing Council.
- 1:50:00 Credits, over comic strip battles scenes. Sprays of blood.
- 1:57:38 ed (117.38)