



Age Ratings You Trust

190th BBFC Board of Classification Meeting

Wednesday, 5 April 2017

Present:

Patrick Swaffer	President
Alison Hastings	Vice President
Gerard Lemos	Vice President
David Austin	Chief Executive
Alexandra Evans (minutes)	Policy Director

Minutes of the previous meeting

1. The minutes were agreed.

Matters arising

2. There were no matters arising.

Recent classification decisions

3. Deputy Compliance Manager, Ian Mashiah, attended the meeting. The Board considered two recent decisions.
4. *The Hangman – Shepherds and Butchers* (15) is set in apartheid South Africa and tells the fictitious story of a lawyer called upon to defend a prison guard accused of murdering seven members of a local football team. The lawyer argues that his client should be spared the death sentence because he has been emotionally traumatised by his work as an executioner. The film was submitted for online classification with a 12 request.
5. The Board viewed a scene in which the guard testifies at his trial. He describes his role in the execution of a group of prisoners details of which are shown in flashback. The clip (which runs to approximately five minutes) shows the condemned men, crying and keening with fear, being taken from their cells to the gallows. Nooses are put around their necks and their faces are covered. A lever is pulled, the floor opens and the men's necks are broken. The camera pans to the men's convulsing feet and to the pool of urine, faeces and blood beneath them.
6. The Board acknowledged that the film was a serious and sober portrayal of the violence of the apartheid era and it raised importance questions about capital punishment. However, it was unanimously agreed that the

duration and tone of the scene combined with its distressing and graphic nature meant that the work was most appropriately placed at 15 with the Short Insight "Distressing scenes of execution by hanging".

7. *Fortitude* (18) is a crime drama set in a small prospector town in the Arctic. The previously tranquil community is blighted by violence.
8. The Board considered a clip from the ninth episode of Series Two in which a Shaman cuts off his genitals in a ritualistic act of self-mutilation. The anxious and shaking man is seen preparing for the procedure by laying out medical supplies, a soldering iron and a large knife. He strips naked and sitting in a bloodstained shower cubicle, injects his groin with an unknown liquid. He then cries out in pain as he begins to sever his penis and testicles. Blood is seen pouring on to the floor between his legs, he then places his genitals on the floor which are subsequently shown next to his bleeding body. Finally, the man uses the soldering iron to cauterise the wound, this detail is not shown and the focus is instead on the man's pained expression and moans.
9. The Board noted the lack of process detail with bloody images shown only in the aftermath. However it was agreed that the duration, intensity and physicality of the scene meant that it should be classified at 18 with the Insight "strong gory injury detail".

Research: viewing decisions 8-12 year olds

10. Alexandra Evans presented the findings of research commissioned by the BBFC into the way that viewing decisions are made by families with children aged 8-12 years old. The research also considered the BBFC's role in the decision-making process for both cinema and home-viewing.
11. The Board agreed that the research provided a great deal of valuable insight and that it should inform upcoming projects such as the brand audit and Classification Guidelines review.
12. The Board will scrutinise the research and its implications for the BBFC in more detail at its next meeting in May. Ms Evans will prepare talking points and circulate these in advance of next month's meeting of the Board of Classification.

Action: Alexandra Evans

BBFC brand audit

13. Ms Evans reported that, following a comprehensive procurement process, the BBFC has appointed Nikki Jones of Headstrong to carry out a brand audit. Ms Jones will speak to all members of staff and also with a wide range of external stakeholders. She will submit her report in June.
14. Ms Evans asked the Presidents whether they might be willing to contribute to the audit by speaking to Ms Jones. The Presidents confirmed that they

were keen to engage. Ms Evans will liaise with the Presidents on availability.

Action: Alexandra Evans

AOB

15. There was no other business.

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday, 17 May 2017