

# Grisly video aimed at film board

## Board encourages hatred against women by allowing 'slasher' films in video stores, coalition says

BY IAN BAILEY  
Canadian Press

TORONTO — Critics who say Ontario's film watchdog encourages hatred against women because it gives the nod to "slasher" films have compiled a videotape of grisly excerpts to support their case.

They're circulating a 90-minute tape showing scenes from such readily available videos as *Blood Feast*, *Three on a Meathook* and *Snuff*, where the plots have women being beheaded, having their tongues yanked out and their fingers ripped off with pliers.

"Dissect and dismember are just words until you see them done — and when you see it done in a light-hearted fashion, it's really offensive," says Valerie Smith, a member of the Coalition for Our Daughter's Safety.

The 40-member coalition is using its tape — called *Real Hatred* — to bolster claims the Ontario Film Review Board is encouraging hatred against women by passing such "slasher" movies.

The coalition, which is distributing its video to politicians and the media, wants the board to keep the

films out of Ontario video stores.

The Toronto-based film review board has about 30 members who screen and classify all films and videotapes entering the province. It can also ban films.

*Blood Feast* and *Snuff* were rated adult accompaniment, but other titles such as *Carnival of Blood* and *Night Ripper* appear to have slipped past the board, complained Smith, an artist in suburban Brampton.

Clips from *Blood Feast* — about a serial killer who worships an Egyptian god — include a sequence depicting the villain yanking out a woman's tongue, which he later uses with other body parts to make stew.

And *Snuff* has a scene that depicts a woman being dissected by a killer who says: "Scream. That's it. Scream," as he snips off her fingers with pliers.

Smith and fellow coalition member Patricia Herdman have filed a complaint with Ontario's Human Rights Commission suggesting slasher films infringe on their rights by sparking hatred against women.

In a terse response to the complaint filed with the commission, the board said it can only act under the

regulations that govern it.

"The board may refuse approval of a film only where the violence is 'graphic and prolonged,' and then . . . only when the context of the film as a whole has been considered," says the statement — a copy of which was obtained by The Canadian Press.

Ab Campion, a spokesman for Ontario's Consumer Ministry, which presides over the board, refused to discuss the complaint but noted it was inevitable for some people will disagree with board rulings.

The coalition has been leading criticism against the board, which was once known for battling filmmakers over the segments of such movies as *The Tin Drum* and *Pretty Baby*.

Mary Brown, the former Ontario Film Review Board boss, used a reel of clips showing explicit sex and violence to scare critics into conceding there was a need for a vigilant censor ready to uphold standards.

But when the Liberals ended more than 40 years of Tory government in 1985, they nudged the board more towards rating films instead of cutting them.