
80's Horror Movies

Posted by MWoody - 2007/10/02 16:18

While you may be too old to Trick or Treat or don't have the heart for Haunted Houses, there are a number of frights that can be enjoyed from the comfort or eventual discomfort of your own home with 80's horror movies.

The first thought that always comes to my mind when I think of horror movies is Friday the 13th which had a series of eight films in the 80's. Jason Vorhees's who wore the infamous hockey mask was the killer who haunted the counselors of Camp Crystal Lake.

As far as plot there is really nothing to praise the films for, they are all pretty much just carbon copies of each other. If nothing else the Friday the 13th series should have served as a good lesson in birth control because sex was always a precursor to death. I don't know how they ever became counselors because they were constantly engaged in sexual relations, drug use and alcohol consumption.

All the rules of horror movies were followed in each film such as; tripping when being chased in the woods, the escape car not starting, running upstairs towards safety and the lone survivor.

There is a scene at the conclusion of the first Friday the 13th (1980) that still gives me chills when I think about it, when Jason leaps out of the lake to pull in the survivor. I didn't see it coming and his disfigured appearance is frightening.

The films also contain a memorable noise which brought an added tension to the coming danger. An echo of the syllables 'ki' and 'ma' were repeated which is short for the phrase, 'Kill her, mommy.'

Another memorable moment in the film series includes 80's icon, Corey Feldman, who in the fourth installment 'The Final Chapter' (1984) shaves his head to play mind games with Jason.

Of course a Kevin Bacon connection exists with the films as he appeared in the first one. The Miami Valley is also linked to the franchise with Tracie Savage who was a victim in part three (1982) and served as a news anchor for WHIO-TV, Channel 7 from 1986-1991.

In the final installment of the 80's, Jason expands his path of mayhem to New York in 'Jason Takes Manhattan' (1989). The same pattern occurs except the setting is on a cruise ship.

Though he has been sliced, diced, scattered, smothered and many other types of physical punishment and Waffle House phrases inflected upon him, Jason kept getting back up and is rumored to be making a return to the big screen. Either way, though he never uttered a word, I consider Jason a legendary character.

The 80's also introduced Freddy Krueger in the Nightmare on Elm Street (1984) which blends the line between dreams and reality. Directed by Wes Craven, he reformed the genre much like he did in the 90's with Scream. Played by Robert Englund, Krueger with a knife fingered glove brought a sense of intelligence and wit to his murderous character with lines such as, 'You've got the body, I've got the brain.' And 'How sweet, fresh meat.'

Four sequels followed in the 80's and in 2003 the two horror icons battled in Jason vs. Freddy.

The first Nightmare starred Johnny Depp, while on his way to superstardom.

A commonly used creepy technique present in the Nightmare films is the use of young children, who are usually cute except for in horror movies. A lullaby sung by a group of girls while jumping rope is far from soothing. While on the subject, I must also mention the ghost of twins in The Shining (1980).

For a trip into another dimension, not only of sight but of sound, go to Twilight Zone: The Movie (1983) which contains four different tales of horror. It doesn't have the gore of the slasher films but focuses more on the psychological fright.

Such as with John Lithgow in the tale 'Nightmare at 20,000 Feet' who plays a man that see's a gremlin on the wing of a passenger plane but disappears for everyone else. Is it really there or is he going crazy?

It's been many years since I have seen the movie but one reason I mention it here is a scene that I still remember from the segment 'It's a Good Life.' Where strangers have been lured into a home and made prisoners by a boy with the ability to turn his imagination into reality. In this segment a teenager turns around to reveal that he has no mouth, and for some reason that image struck me with terror even though I don't talk very much.

There is also a Miami Valley connection to the Twilight Zone with the voice of Bart Simpson, Nancy Cartwright, who grew up in Kettering and appears in the film.

While any movie with a little person in the cast holds a special place in my heart, such as Poltergeist (1982), which

also holds prestige with me because of the chills it delivers. Ghosts communicate through the static on the television screen to a family's five year old daughter, which leads to the house being haunted. The girl's utterance of 'They're here,' became a catch phrase. While she had the look of innocence she was overcome with evil. While I'm not one who has a fear of clowns, there is a scene where a toy clown comes to Also, Poltergeist is a movie that has an actual plot rather than just trying to produce terror, which is good.

Two sequels followed in 1986 and 1988 and for the second film, special mention is given to Julian Beck who plays Reverend Henry Kane whose mere presence on screen is scary.

Due to the death of some of the cast members, including the demise of two of the actors at a young age, an urban legend exists that there is a curse on those who starred in the films.

For some October frights, check out these movies or other classic horror films from the 80's.

Re:80's Horror Movies

Posted by Demain66 - 2008/04/29 08:05

I have the Nightmare On Elmstreet Box Set and it's amazing that something that scared our generation brings peals of laughter to my two sons. They think it's hysterical when Jason seems to be walking at .005 mph and still catches the running teen. They play some sequences frame by frame because you can see when the director cuts and replaces the actor with a mannequin. They take all the fun out of old scary movies. Some of my favorite scary movies (some of which date way before the 80's) are The Thing, Trick Or Treat, Evil Dead and the most scary movie ever made, The Exorcist.

Re:80's Horror Movies

Posted by Remidica - 2008/04/29 09:13

I don't know about you, but I must state that the green slimy puke was hot. :silly:

Re:80's Horror Movies

Posted by reggaeuplifts - 2008/05/27 16:52

This was the scariest thing to happen to me when it came out.
