

**EENY**

**MEENY  
MINY**

**CHARACTER TROPES IN SLASHER FILMS**

**MOE**

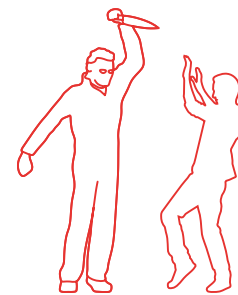
**EDITED BY NNYJI WHITFIELD**



**EENY**

**MEENY  
MINY**

**MOE**



~~04~~

**GUIDE TO THE KILL**

Masks, weapons, and motives.

~~28~~

**THE NERDY PRACTICAL JOKER**

The dork who knows it all.

~~66~~

**THE NICE GUY**

Can you trust him?

~~98~~

**MOVIE INDEX**

A list of all the Slasher movies mentioned.

~~08~~

**BEHIND THE MASK**

Movies, directors, and writers.

~~42~~

**THE JOCK**

The jerk who is a non-believer.

~~78~~

**THE FINAL GIRL**

The lone survivor.

~~100~~

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

References and works cited.

~~16~~

**THE TOKEN**

Minorities in slasher films.

~~54~~

**THE SLUTTY CHEERLEADER**

The blonde who gets naked.

~~92~~

**CRITICS SAID WHAT?**

Critics opinions on slasher tropes.

MASKS  
AND  
WEAPONS



**Jason Voorhees**

Introduced in Friday the 13th Part III, Jason Voorhees' trademark is the Goaltender mask.



He uses a machete to kill his victims.



**Harry Warden**

The mask is worn to assume the identity of The Miner.



The famous serial killer miner uses a pick axe for his kills.



**Michael Myers**

He wears a Captain Kirk mask that is painted white. The mask was made from a cast of William Shatner's face.



Michael gets very creative with his methods for murder, but his go to weapon is a kitchen knife.



**Ghostface**

The mask is inspired by The Scream painting by Edvard Munch.



He uses a Buck 120, which is a common eight-inch hunting knife.



**Hooded Killer**

Worn to hide the identity of the killer while hunting for victims to kill based on popular urban legends.



The Urban Legend killer used a hook to kill their victims.



**Vincent Sinclair**

Vincent wears a wax mask to hide the facial disfigurement he acquired by being separated from his conjoined twin Bo.



He used wax and created figures out of living bodies.



**Freddy Krueger**

Although not a mask, Freddy's burn marks are iconic to his character.



Freddy's glove is based on the ninja weapon *neko te* and was made by Freddy himself.



**Leatherface**

He wears a mask made of human skin.



He uses a chainsaw.

**MOTIVES  
AND  
ATTIRE**

**Jason Voorhees**

After his mother's death, Jason returned to Crystal Lake and came back to the camp year after year to torment and murder teenagers to avenge his mother's death.

Jason layered himself with a long sleeve black t-shirt, a blue t-shirt, black work pants, a hooded jacket, black boots, and black gloves.

**Harry Warden**

He is depicted as a once normal man who descended into madness when his bosses weren't paying attention to their workers, which led to the disaster and subsequently Warden's insanity.

Harry wore a jumpsuit, hard hat, black boots, black gloves and a brown belt.

**Michael Myers**

Michael is motivated by a combination of neglect and sexual jealousy. His sister, who was responsible for baby-sitting him, but instead neglected him to be with her boyfriend.

Michael wore a grey jumpsuit or coverall, which he typically steals from a mechanic, trucker or station attendant after killing them.

**Ghostface**

Billy Loomis was motivated because Sidney's mother had a sexual relationship with his father. This generated a series of connected motives targeting Sidney in Ghostface plots going forward.

The costume is a full length robe, black boots and a white mask.

**Hooded Killer**

Brenda is enacting revenge for her fiancé David Evans, after the fatality in the road accident Natalie and Michelle caused.

The Hooded Killer wore a hooded black coat with fur around the hood, black gloves, black pants and black boots.

**Vincent Sinclair**

After the death of their parents, Vincent was dependent on Bo, who scared him into taking part in a system in which Lester would guide travellers to Ambrose, where Bo and Vincent would kidnap them, cover their skin with wax.

Vincent has long, greasy, black hair, dark clothes with a hood that he does not have up.

**Freddy Krueger**

Freddy Krueger was a child murderer until he was burned alive by the parents of Elm Street. He was reborn as a demon who haunts teenagers' dreams.

His burned face is paired with a black and green sweater, black pants, black shoes, and a brown fedora.

**Leatherface**

Leatherface is a "big baby" who kills in self-defense because he feels threatened. He also kills when directed to by his older family members. He is very dependent.

He wore a men's linen striped shirt, butcher apron, formal tie, and flat-front pants.



## BEHIND THE MASK

The teen slasher film came into its own in the late 1970s and quickly became one of the most popular subgenres of horror in the decade that followed. Scholars generally agree that *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974) and *Halloween* were the original films that generated the cycle. Both pioneered films in a number of ways. They featured imperiled, sexually attractive women being stalked by a knife-wielding serial killer and included scenes of unexpected and shocking violence and brutality—conventions that would eventually be associated with the slasher genre. They also initiated the tradition of having a group of young, often teenage people as victims, introducing the youth-focused element that marked the arrival of the teen-oriented slasher film. They inaugurated the virtually indestructible, psychotic villains associated with the slasher film. They originated the trend toward spin-offs, sequels, and imitators, sparking a rash of successful slasher-film franchises.



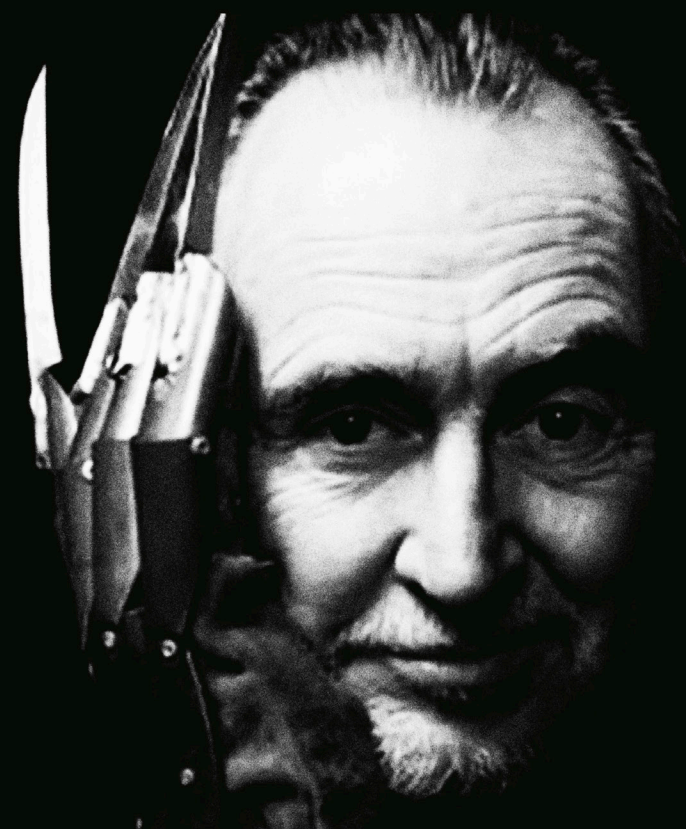
The popularity of these films has in fact been tied to the increasing familiarity of these conventions. As Andrew Britton notes, "It became obvious at a very early stage [in the slasher film's cycle] that every spectator knew exactly what the film was going to do at every point, even down to the order in which it would dispose of its various characters, [. . . yet,] the film's total predictability did not create boredom or disappointment [—at least not initially]. On the contrary, the predictability was clearly the main source of pleasure, and the only occasion for disappointment would have been a modulation of the formula, not a repetition of it."

While still psychologically disturbed maniacs, *Scream's* villains are not misfits or outsiders, nor are they the uncharacterized monsters typical of earlier slasher films. Instead, the killers in *Scream* are seemingly normal, attractive, popular people, often "insiders," boyfriends or friends who initially appear harmless until they go on a killing spree. Trencansky notes as much when she acknowledges that "in the *Scream* and [I Know What You Did Last] Summer (1997) series, the monster is changed from a supernatural force to a resolutely ordinary person, human, personally troubled, and usually a member of the heroine's close circle of friends."

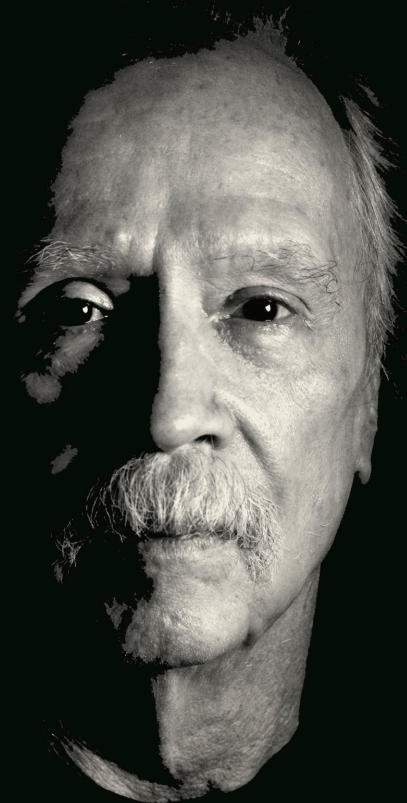
## DIRECTORS

### WES CRAVEN

Wesley Earl Craven (August 2, 1939 – August 30, 2015) was an American film director, writer, producer, and actor. He was known for his pioneering work in the genre of horror films, particularly slasher films, where he mixed horror clichés with humor and satire. His impact on the genre was considered prolific and influential. Due to the success and cultural impact of his works in the horror film genre, Craven has been called a "Master of Horror". He is best known for creating *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984) and *Scream* (1996), featuring the characters of Freddy Krueger, Nancy Thompson, Ghostface, and Sidney Prescott.







## JOHN CARPENTER

John Howard Carpenter (born January 16, 1948) is an American filmmaker, screenwriter and composer. Although Carpenter has worked with various movie genres, he is associated most commonly with horror, action, and science fiction films of the 1970s and 1980s. Most films of Carpenter's career were initially commercial and critical failures, with the notable exceptions of *Halloween* (1978), *The Fog* (1980), *Escape from New York* (1981), and *Starman* (1984). However, many of Carpenter's films from the 1970s and the 1980s have come to be considered as cult classics, and he has been acknowledged as an influential filmmaker.

## TOBE HOOPER

Willard Tobe Hooper (January 25, 1943 – August 26, 2017) was an American director, screenwriter, and producer best known for his work in the horror genre. Among his most recognized films are *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974), which *The Guardian* described as "one of the most influential films ever made", and *Poltergeist* (1982), which received three Academy Award nominations. Hooper died in 2017 at the age of 74 of natural causes.



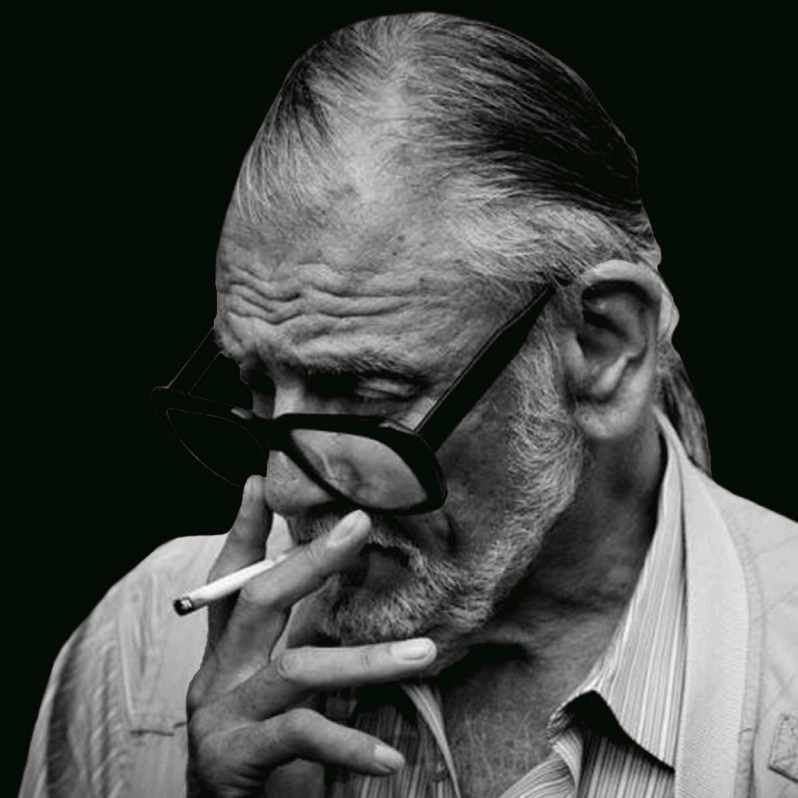


### GEORGE A. ROMERO

George Andrew Romero (; February 4, 1940 – July 16, 2017) was an American filmmaker, writer and editor. He is best known for his series of gruesome and satirical horror films about an imagined zombie apocalypse, beginning with *Night of the Living Dead* (1968). This film is often considered a progenitor of the fictional zombie of modern culture. Other films in the series include *Dawn of the Dead* (1978) and *Day of the Dead* (1985). Aside from this series, his works include *The Crazies* (1973), *Martin* (1978), *Creep show* (1982), *Monkey Shines* (1988), *The Dark Half* (1993) and *Bruiser* (2000). He also created and executive-produced the 1983–88 television series *Tales from the Darkside*.

### ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Sir Alfred Joseph Hitchcock (13 August 1899 – 29 April 1980) was an English film director and producer, widely regarded as one of the most influential filmmakers in the history of cinema. Known as “the Master of Suspense”, he directed over 50 feature films in a career spanning six decades, becoming as well known as any of his actors thanks to his many interviews, his cameo roles in most of his films, and his hosting and producing of the television anthology *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (1955–1965). Born in Leytonstone, Essex, Hitchcock entered the film industry in 1919 as a title card designer after training as a technical clerk and copy writer for a telegraph-cable company.



THE TOKEN

THE

TOKEN

THE  
TOKEN

TOKEN

THE TOKEN  
THE TOKEN



There has been a stereotyping of minorities and people of colour in the horror genre, especially within American films. Throughout the history of the genre there has been a devaluing of the roles of minorities within such films, and according to one critic "a use of aspects from their culture as fodder for the plot". These films tend to have a predominantly white cast and audience, and cast minorities as violent characters, monsters, or villains. The horror genre in particular holds the power to play with aspects of violence in intriguing and symbolic ways.



Black or any other characters from minorities are often said to be the first ones to die within horror films. While it is not necessarily true that these characters die first, a larger percentage die at some point in the movie. Valerie did a survey of 50 horror films that starred black characters, finding that only 10% had black characters that died first in the film; however, a great deal of those characters still died at some point in the movies.

On top of their imminent death, these characters are also notably given a lack of character development, especially in comparison to white counterparts. According to Valerie, in her breakdown of the development of black characters in horror, black characters stand a greater chance of survival if they are teamed with a white woman by the end, if the entire cast is black, or if the villain is a black person.





## RELATION TO THE KILLER

In the past, black leads were kept away from any big-budget films outside of those that focused specifically on race or used it to make a point. Historically, movie makers were generally writing to white audiences, so it was natural (in their opinion) for whites to get more screen time. And if the writers throw in a Token Minority to give the cast a more believable real-world racial balance, who do you think is going to die first, the Token Minority, or the people who have a bigger role in the script?

**"WE'RE HERE REPORTING LIVE FOR 'BLACK TV'. WHITE FOLKS ARE DEAD, SO WE GETTIN' THE FUCK OUTTA HERE!"**

– A Black Reporter, *Scary Movie*



# "I HATE



As minority actors became more common in significant roles, this trope found new ways to stay relevant. Instead of the Token Minority being unimportant Cannon Fodder, they instead became the most important supporting character, so their deaths would have the most dramatic impact on the plot.

Films would take a Scary Black Man, turn him into The Big Guy, and kill him off to show how strong the monster is. In action or horror films, The Hero (typically a White Male Lead) might have a Token Black Friend that gets killed off or does a Heroic Sacrifice to show that this is no laughing matter. 80s horror shows were good at this, and film makers had growing backlash against all the exploitation films.



# SCARY MOVIES."

– Maureen Evans, *Scream 2*

## ATTRIBUTES AND APPEARANCE

- 1** African American
- 2** Muscular
- 3** Curly hair or braids
- 4** Short haircut or dreadlocks

### WHO WORE IT BEST?



His hoodie is paired with sweat-pants.



Karla wore a button-down patterned blouse and jeans.



Her shoes vary in color but are typically brown or black heeled boots.



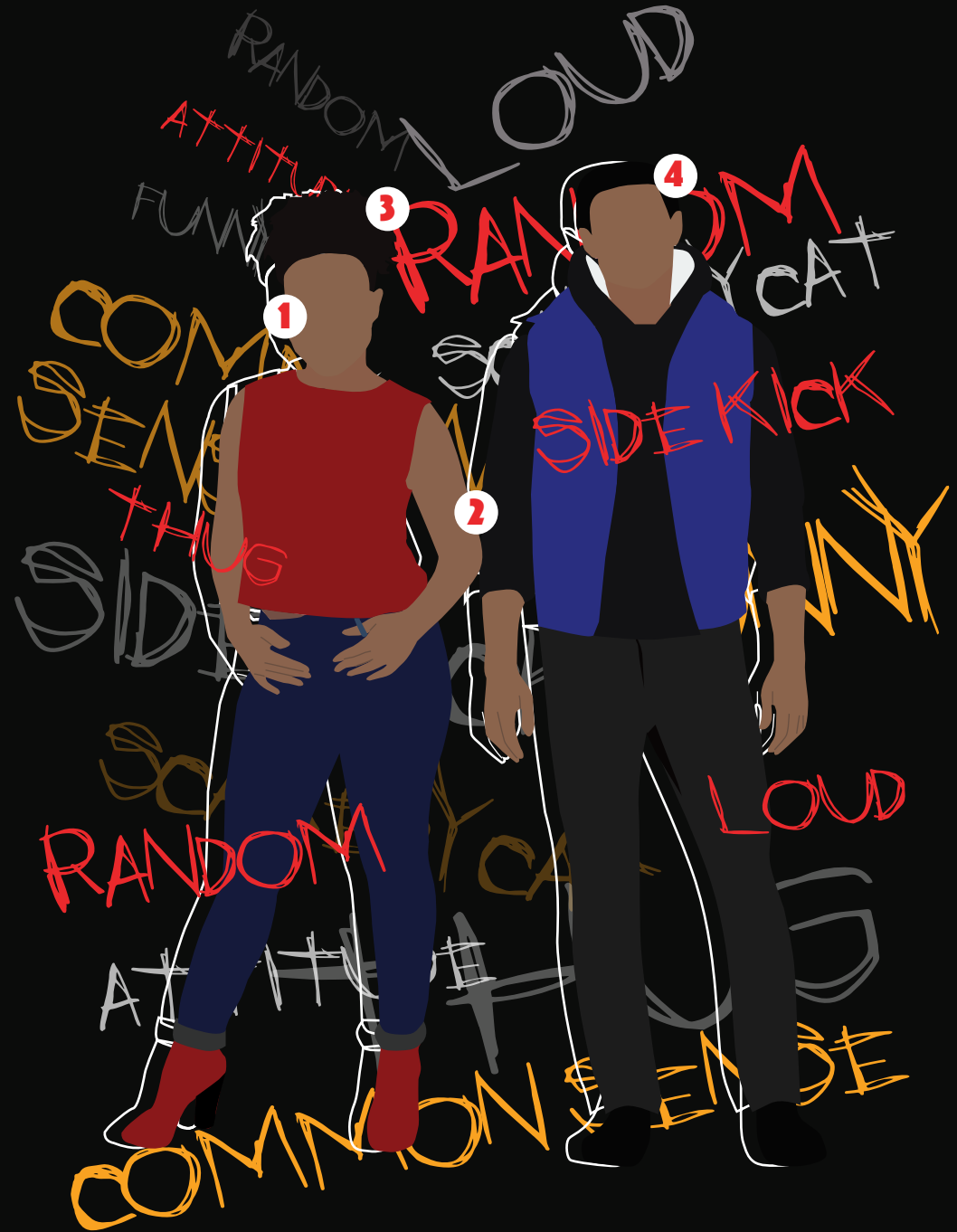
Maureen wore brown pants with a wine red tank top and a matching cardigan.



Their jewelry or chains. Often a religious cross.



Blake wore a blue sweatshirt with white adidas sweatpants.



## MOVIE SEQUENCE

The Token's death scene in different movies.

### Dr. Giggles – Officer Joe Reitz's death



Joe tries to be heroic and fights off Dr. Giggles giving the Final Girl a chance to get away.



He is soon stabbed and killed.

### Freddy vs. Jason – Kia Waterson's death



Kia teases Freddy, showing the funny side of the token character.

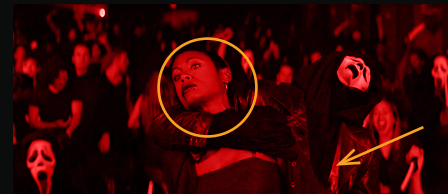


Jason appears behind her flinging her to a tree with his machete.

### Scream 2 – Maureen Evans death



Maureen sees blood on her hands after touching the killer who she thinks is her boyfriend.



After being stabbed once, Maureen tries to get away but is stabbed again in the back.



NERDY PRACTICAL JOKER

NERDY

# THE NERDY PRACTICAL JOKER

of

NERDY PRACTICAL



The "false scare" is a critical element in the slasher movie. The killer can't be everywhere all the time, and yet the movie needs an occasional jump or jolt between scenes of exposition to keep tension high.

**“SOMEBODY  
SENT  
THOSE  
DEAD  
FUCKS  
UP HERE  
TO KILL  
US.”**

– Marty Mikalski, *The Cabin in the Woods*



The practical joker, another high school-age character, covers this function. The practical joker is usually a maladroit dork who finds excessive humor in teasing the final girl, or dressing like the killer. His life expectancy in the slasher film is not long. Often, he runs smack into the killer while planning his next practical joke.

The practical joker is usually a dorky kid who gets off on teasing the final girl and making an ass of himself. The practical joker serves a very useful purpose in the slasher film by setting up the false scare. Since so much of this straightforward formula hinges upon the idea that a killer is watching and readying to strike, a sudden “jolt” moment can be squeezed out of an unexpected practical joke.

**JAMIE!**



**LOOK**

**BEHIND**



**YOU!**

- Randy Meeks, *Scream*





## SLASHER MOVIE ADVICE FROM RANDY

"There are certain RULES that one must abide by in order to successfully survive a horror movie."

### 1 YOU CAN NEVER HAVE SEX.

"Big no no! Big no no!  
Sex equals death, okay?"

### 2 YOU CAN NEVER DRINK OR DO DRUGS.

"The sin factor! It's a sin.  
It's an extension of number one."

"Never, ever, ever under  
any circumstances say,"

### 3 "I'LL BE RIGHT BACK."

"Because you won't  
be back."

The nerdy practical joker's relation to the killer is not usually as dramatic as the killer's relationship with the final girl. But, there is still a very reasonable answer as to why they are killed off. They know too much. This character typically has a massive knowledge on how scary movies are set up and the order in which the characters die. They provide as much information for the group to contain before finally being killed off for most likely knowing too much of the information.

**"I'M JUST KIDDING  
AROUND, OFFICER."**

– Ned Rubenstein, *Friday the 13th*



The practical joker side of this character in 1980's slasher films took on more of an annoying role than a logical role. It wasn't until *Scream* that this character was assigned the role of knowing all the rules to surviving a horror movie.

**"CAN IT, COCHISE."**

– Officer Dorf, *Friday the 13th*



**ATTRIBUTES  
AND  
APPEARANCE**

- 1** Slouching posture
- 2** Green t-shirt
- 3** Grey pants
- 4** Sneakers

**WHO  
WORE  
IT  
BEST?**



His baseball cap.



His long sleeve shirt under a t shirt.



His book of rules on how to survive a horror movie.



Dalton wore a blue sweatshirt, black shirt with a yellow collar, black jeans and a red cap.



Randy wore green shirt with the word fresh jive across the center and khaki pants.



Marty wore a grey shirt with a green button up and brown cardigan and grey jeans.



## MOVIE SEQUENCE

The Nerdy Practical Joker's Death  
in *The Final Girl's* movie scene.



**Duncan:** Look, movies like this end when the final girl kills the main bad guy and the credits roll. It's actually pretty sick in this one.



**Duncan:** She kicks up the sword and she like kills him with his own machette, and she's like wha-boom!



**Duncan:** Billy's like, Noo! and it goes right through his hand like twah! Head splits open, bwoosh! punches it, wha boosh! Brain goes out, whaaaa!



**Chris:** Duncan!  
**Duncan:** Anyway, the smokin hot girl called Paula, she arrives in the next reel. She's the final girl.



**Duncan:** Oh yeah! oh yeah! She is the only one in this movie who doesn't die. All we gotta do is stick with her and we're gonna have the best seats in the house.



**Duncan:** Trust me this last battle will blow your mind. Okay, selfie time!  
[Billy walks towards him. [Duncan shakes staring at Billy]



[Billy walks away]  
**Duncan:** [laughing] I think I almost pissed my pants.  
**Gertie:** [laughing] You did piss your pants!



**Duncan:** What? No I didn't-  
[Billy tosses the machette into Duncan's side off camera]



SKEPTICAL JOCK

THE

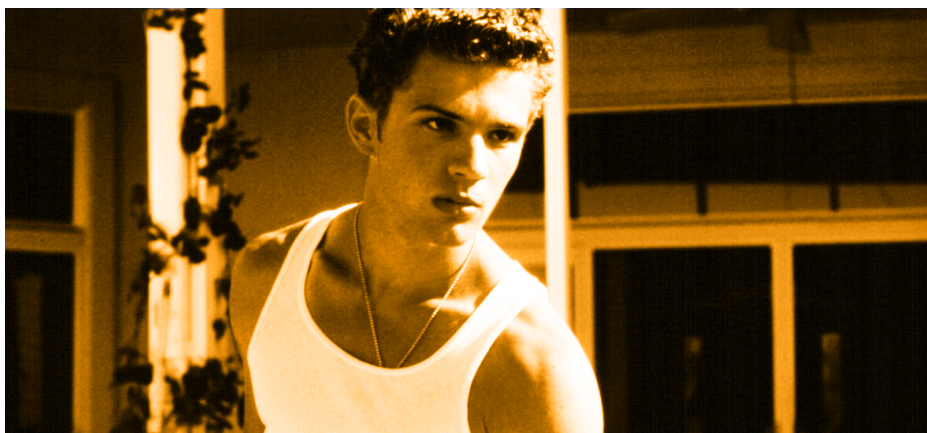
# THE SKEPTICAL JOCK

JOCK



Here's a simple fact for an afterschool special: The popular kids don't survive horror movies, almost ever. Designed for an adolescent audience, slasher movies involve likeable characters, usually teenage girls, navigating the terrors of high school age. The jock's character is a physically attractive jerk who just wants to have sex. People gravitate toward the athletic hero even though the character is not nice, intelligent, or deep.





**“WE MADE  
A PACT  
AND WE’RE  
KEEPING IT.”**

– Barry Cox,  
*I Know What You Did Last Summer*

He can be either obnoxious or a sensitive boyfriend, and many slashers tease audiences that this alpha male, the traditional hero in mainstream film, will survive. Usually he doesn’t.



**“I THINK**

**I’M**

**DYING**

**HERE**

**MAN.”**

- Stu Macher, *Scream*



The jocks chances of surviving a slasher film are slim, perhaps because many of the folks who write and direct horror movies are geeks themselves and have no love for the jock mentality or his popularity with girls.

In Halloween, Lynda and Bob make hasty use of the master bedroom. Afterward, Bob goes downstairs for a beer. In the kitchen he is silently dispatched by the killer.

**“I HAD A  
HARD-ON  
THIS  
MORNING  
WHEN I  
WOKE UP,  
TINA...  
HAD  
YOUR  
NAME  
WRITTEN  
ALL  
OVER IT.”**

– Rod Lane  
*A Nightmare on Elm Street*





## MOVIE SEQUENCE

The Skeptical Jock's death scene in different movies.

### Urban Legend – Damon Brooks actions and consequences



Damon's obnoxious attitude shined through in this scene where he tricks everyone into



thinking he was dying from the urban legend of consuming pop rocks and soda together.



In another scene, he is shown with the final girl Natalie, where he is



repaid for his prank by the killer. He is captured and hung from a tree.

### Friday the 13th – Jack Burrell's actions and consequences



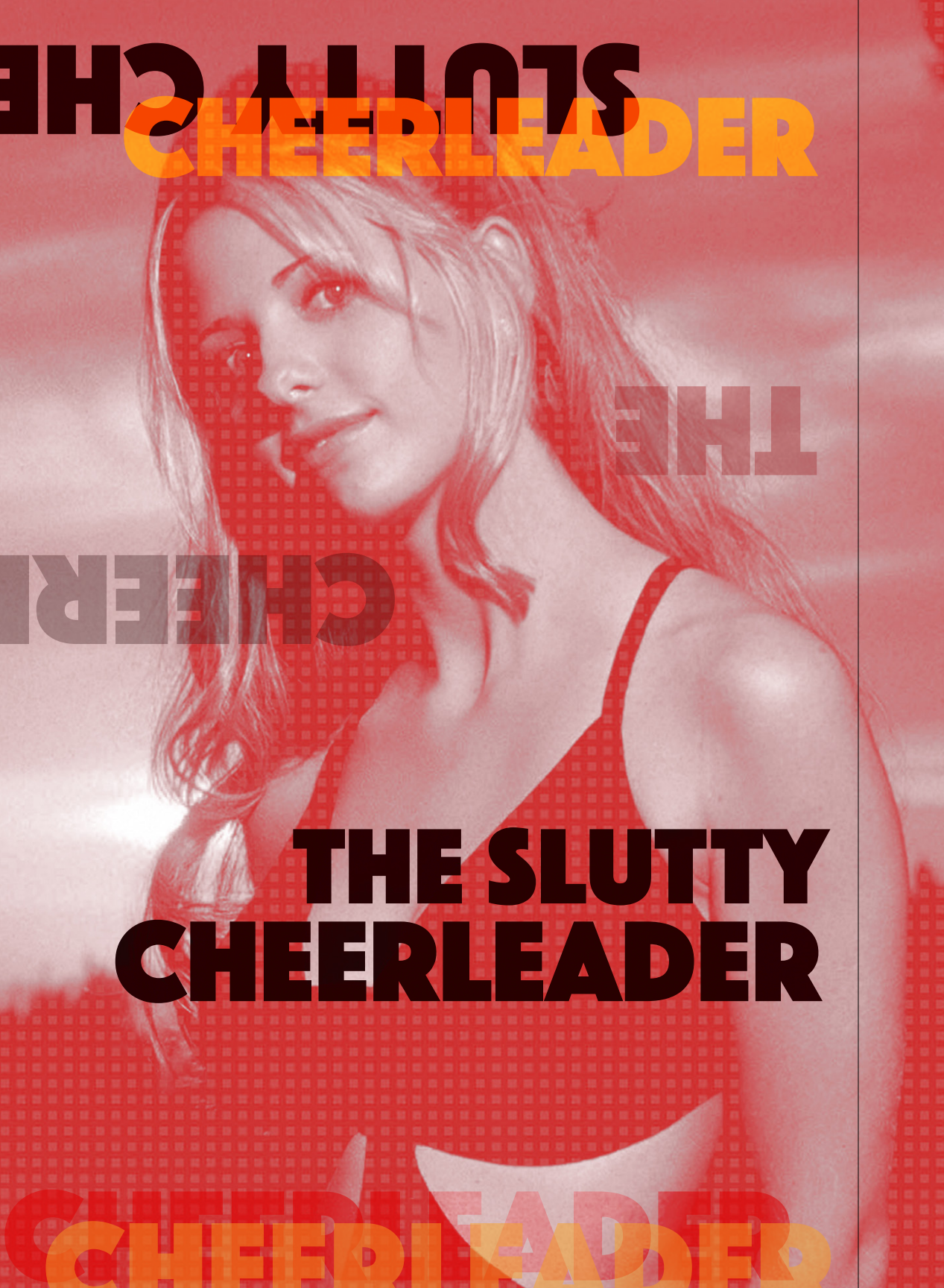
Jack and Marcie have sex in one of the cabin's bunk beds.



Soon after Marcie leaves to go to the bathroom,



Jack's throat is pierced with an arrow from beneath the bed.



# THE SLUTTY CHEERLEADER

## INTRODUCTION

The cheerleader is the bitchy female competition who would rather humiliate you than be your friend. The final girl's best friend is usually a more sexually experienced and sarcastic character, and sometimes mean-spirited-a bitch. This character, along with the jock, often take part in the breast part of the movie. This exploitive element of the slasher lexicon remains proof positive that the horror genre is not always high-minded or intellectual in nature. Sometimes the form appeals and caters to more basic instincts. Sometimes, the first mission of horror is to exploit a fear or desire, and it's foolish to deny that this is the case.



But absolutely without a doubt, the most common shot in all of the 1980s slasher cinema involves a young female removing her blouse and bra for the camera. It's almost a rite of passage for a prospective scream queen of that era. Some critics might inform you that the numerous instances of female nudity in genre films arose because America boasts a sexist culture, and because young men, the dominant audience for horror films back in the 1980s, wanted to see it.

Others might point more directly to the specific conventions of the slasher subgenre, which concern the draconian price people pay when they step outside of moral and social boundaries. In particular, the vice-precedes-slice-and-dice trope requires teens to act badly before being killed by Jason or his ilk, and premarital sex is, of course, a big no-no. The "breast part of the movie" convention is thus part and parcel of that dynamic. The shirts come off, the sinning begins, and then the killer shows up with a machete to put an end to all the fun.

Since the 1980s, the slasher film has admirably focused on showcasing "final girls" as intelligent, resourceful, courageous heroes rather than as mere sex objects. The "breast part of the movie" trope was mocked and satirized in Kevin Williamson's *Scream* (1996), for instance.



## RELATION TO THE KILLER



– Helen Shivers, *I Know What You Did Last Summer*

**“WE SHOULD  
HAVE A PLAN.  
ANGELA  
LANSBURY  
ALWAYS HAD  
A PLAN.”**

There is no grand unified theory of the girls who die first, but there are observable patterns. The rules for girls in horror movies are the same as the rules in the real world. Don't fuck. Don't drink. Don't do drugs. Don't go anywhere by yourself. A character who breaks those rules is doomed; a woman who breaks those rules is blamed.

There's a morality play element to this, as countless film writers have explored: girls in horror movies are punished for doing things girls aren't supposed to do, especially for having sex. But there's an even simpler way of looking at it. In horror movies as in life, you're supposed to direct your attention toward survival. Sex is a distraction. If you close your eyes for a kiss you won't see the knife coming.

**“LIP BALM  
I DROPPED  
MY STUPID  
LIP BALM.”** – Paige Edwards, *House of Wax*



## RELATION TO THE KILLER

After Michael takes Bob's glasses and covers himself with a sheet, he goes upstairs to attack Lynda. "Supposing the bespectacled ghost in the doorway to be Bob, Lynda jokes, bares her breasts provocatively, and finally, in irritation at "Bob" 's stony silence, dials Laurie on the phone. Now the killer advances, strangling her with the telephone cord, so that what Laurie hears on the other end are squeals she takes to be orgasmic."

Marion is first and foremost a sexual transgressor. The first scenes show her in a hotel room dressing at the end of a lunch hour, asking her lover to marry her. It is, of course, her wish to be made an honest woman that leads her to abscond with forty thousand dollars, an act that leads her to the Bates motel in Fairvale. In much the way we watched her dress in the opening sequences, we now watch her undress. Moments later, nude in the shower, she dies.



**"NO PLEASE DONT KILL ME MR. GHOSTFACE. I WANNA BE IN THE SEQUEL."**

– Tatum Riley, *Scream*

**"WHO NEEDS BOOKS**

– Lynda Van Der Kloek, *Halloween*

**ANYWAY."**



## ATTRIBUTES AND APPEARANCE

### WHO WORE IT BEST?



She is often shown in her undergarments before her death.



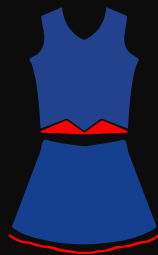
Helen Shivers wore a green form fitting dress.



The crown she wears after winning Homecoming Queen or a Beauty Pageant.



Tatum Riley wore a green turtleneck shirt and an orange patterned mini skirt.



Her cheerleading uniform.



Irene Donnelly appears fully nude during her ten minute scene.

- 1 Blonde hair
- 2 Fresh manicure
- 3 Mini skirt
- 4 Shows lots of skin
- 5 Heels



## MOVIE SEQUENCE

Three different movie scenes of the Slutty Cheerleader character running half naked from the killer.

### I Know What You Did Last Summer



A slit in her spaghetti strapped dress.

### Urban Legend



Her breasts hang out while she runs from the killer.

### House of Wax



She is only wearing a bra and underwear during her chase scene.



The killer takes photos of only the Slutty Cheerleaders dead body.



## INTRODUCTION



By 1980, the male rescuer is either dismissably marginal or dispensed with altogether; not a few films have him rush to the rescue only to be hacked to bits, leaving the final girl to save herself after all. The character that all viewers want to love is the love interest. He is loyal to the final girl and often makes it to the end, but he is untrustworthy throughout the film, due to his character often being revealed as the killer.

He shows very little emotion but this could be because he has to stay strong and supportive for the other characters, mostly the final girl. Their actions are always unpredictable, which is why they are perceived to be the killer because they attempt to be brave and go after them.

## RELATION TO THE KILLER

The nice guy plays as the protector role, specifically for the final girl. He is generally characterized as being the boyfriend to the final girl and either survives until the end with her, or is killed last. As previously mentioned, he can also often turn out to be the killer behind the mask.



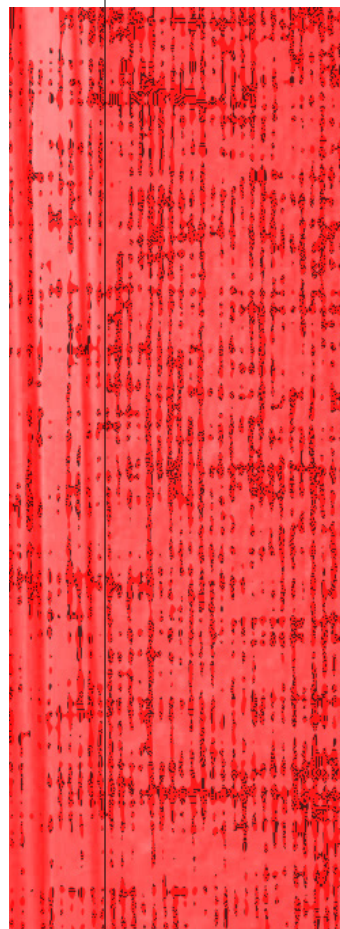
**“NO ONE  
GETS ME  
THE WAY  
YOU DO.”**

– Ray Bronson, *I Know What You Did Last Summer*



**“MORALITY  
SUCKS.”**

– Glen Lantz, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*



**“IT’S A LOT SCARIER WHEN THERE’S NO MOTIVE, SID.”**

– Billy Loomis, *Scream*

In *Scream*, the “nice” guy or love interest of Sidney was Billy Loomer, a mysterious loner who came off sketchy and was actually accused of being the killer throughout the movie. This tactic lead the audience to believe that he was not the killer, since typically the person accused is killed off not too long after. But in this case, Billy surprised Sidney and the audience by actually taking on the second ghost face along with his best friend Stu.

However in *House of Wax*, the nice guy takes on the role of Carly’s brother. Carly successfully plays her final girl role, defeating the masked killer, but it did not hurt to have a little help from her brother to finish it off. Her brother could have turned out to be the nice guy who survives due to their being two jocks added to the group. Wade, Carly’s boyfriend who was killed off first, and Blake, who was coupled up with hot girl Paige.



## ATTRIBUTES AND APPEARANCE

### WHO WORE IT BEST?



His button down shirt is paired with trousers.



His white tank top is paired with jeans or sweat pants.



His denim jacket is paired with blue jeans.



Paul Gardner wore a white undershirt and a blue button down shirt.

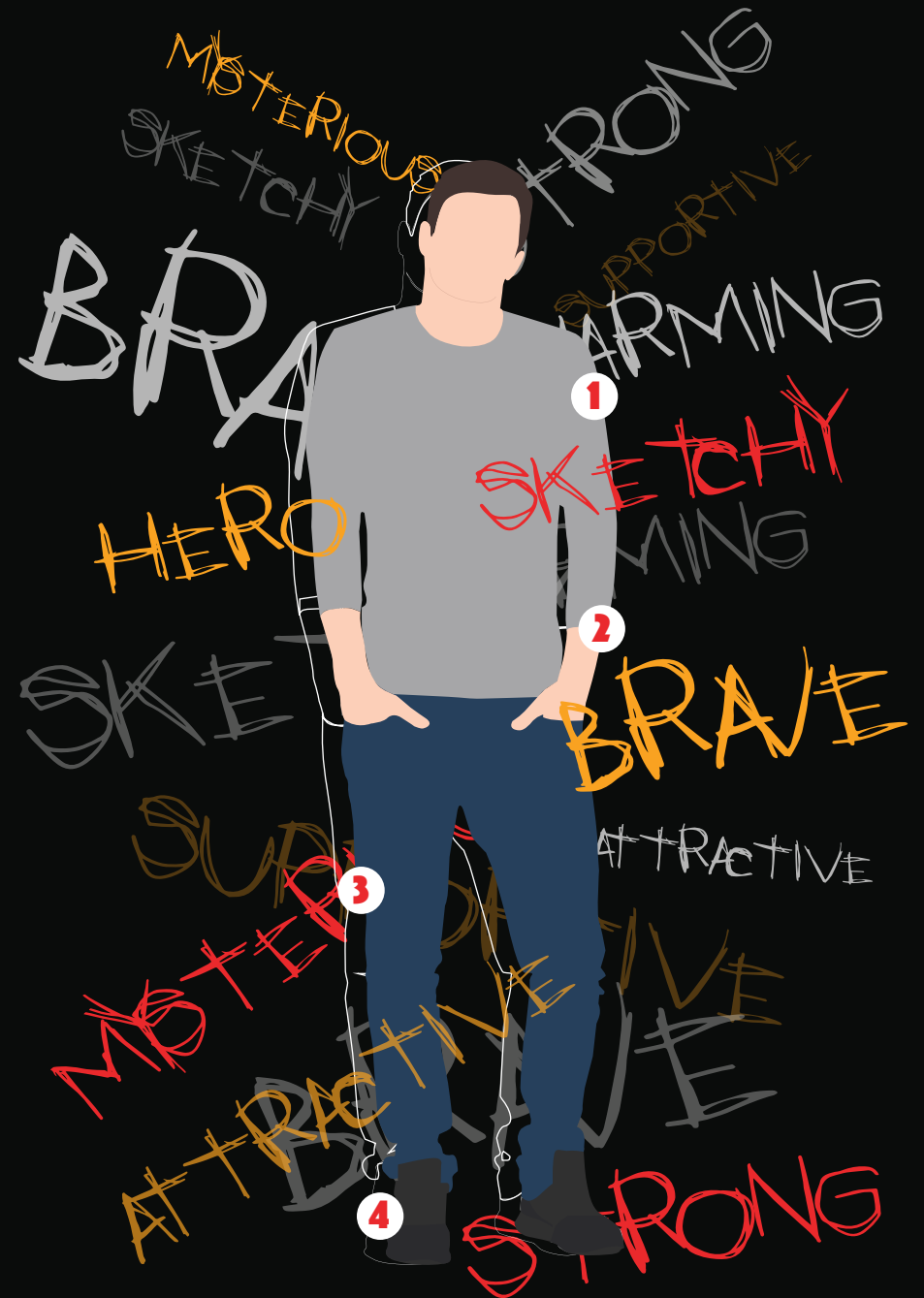


Glen Lantz wore a number 10 cropped jersey and blue sweat pants.



Nick wore a hoodie and jeans.

- 1 Grey or white long sleeve shirt
- 2 Blue jeans
- 3 Sleeves rolled up
- 4 Sneakers





## MOVIE SEQUENCE

The Nice Guy character in different movie scenes.



**Urban Legend.** Paul was framed and accused of being the killer after a body planted by the real killer was found in his trunk.



**Scream.** While Sidney tried to help Billy escape from the killer, he turned around and shot Randy, revealing that he was actually the killer.



**A Nightmare on Elm Street.** Glen fell asleep and was soon killed by Freddy. One of the rare instances where the Nice Guy character is killed off, unless he is the killer.



## INTRODUCTION



Scholar Carol J. Clover coined the term “final girl” to describe the near-ubiquitous protagonist of the slasher-film format. Unlike the practical joker, the jock, the cheerleader, or the teenagers, the final girl is intelligent and focused, and she is the first character to discern danger. Usually, the final girl is not sexually active, perhaps in part because her choices are limited to the above-referenced jock or practical joker, and neither is a suitable mate.



**“WHAT  
ARE  
YOU  
WAITING  
FOR**

– Julie James  
*I Know What You Did Last Summer*

**HUH?”**

The final girl is the slasher film’s powerful inoculation from accusations of misogyny, because she is the format’s only truly human and likable character. She displays intelligence, resourcefulness, courage, and physical skill.

The final girl may seem “ordinary” on first blush, but this ordinariness cloaks the very qualities necessary to survive an encounter with Jason, Michael, or any other slasher. Clover writes that the final girl alone “finds the strength to stay the killer long enough to be rescued (Ending A), or to kill him herself (Ending B).”

Sarah Trencansky, author of *Final Girls* and *Terrible Youth: Transgression in 1980s Slasher Horror*, adds that if the villains of such films initiate the bloody action, it is the “female heroines who decide how and when the story will end. “Thus, in the final analysis, the films belong to the final girl, not the slasher.

In a way, the final-girl archetype is the best thing to arise from the slasher-movie paradigm: a role model who suggests that power and strength are not male qualities, and that conformity is not only undesirable in a teenager, but a quality that could actually get him or her killed.



## RELATION TO THE KILLER

Michael has escaped from the asylum, in which he has been incarcerated since the age of six. His incarceration resulted from murdering his sister minutes after she and her boyfriend parted following an illicit interlude in her parents' bed.

That murder, in flashback, opens the film. Fifteen years later, Michael escapes his prison and returns to kill Laurie, whom he construes as another version of his sister (a sequel clarifies that she is in fact his younger sister, adopted by another family at the time of the earlier tragedy). Michael's sexual anger towards his sister (in the Halloween series) drives him to kill her, and after her a string of sister surrogates.

## "WHAT'S THE BOOGEYMAN?"

**"YOU LIKE  
PAIN?"**

– Dana Polk, *The Cabin in the Woods*



– Laurie Strode, *Halloween*

**“WHATEVER  
YOU DO,**

**D O N ’ T F A L L**

**ASLEEP.”**

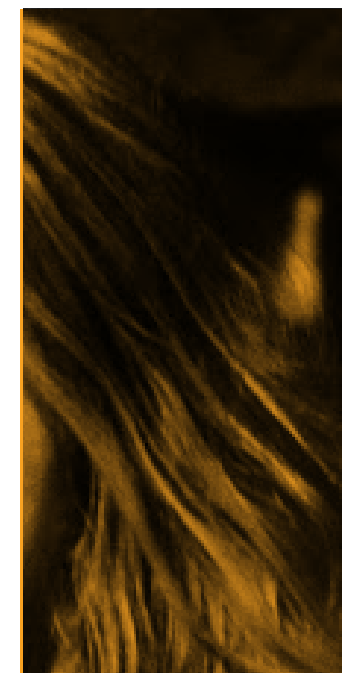
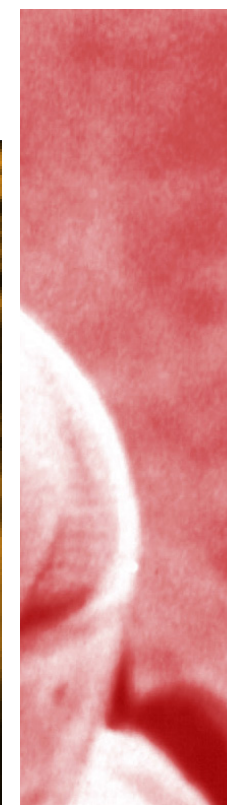
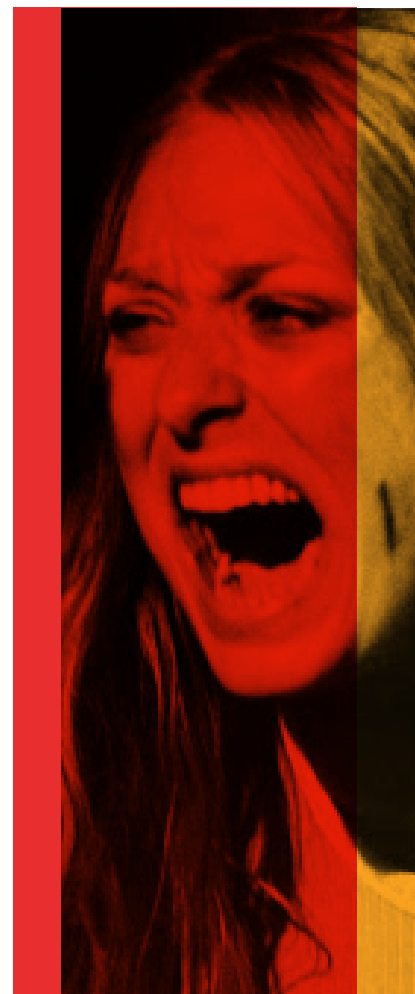
– Nancy Thompson, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*

In *The Texas Chainsaw Masacre*, Sally's brother and companions were dispatched suddenly and uncomprehending, one by one, but Sally survives the ninth round. None of the brothers show overt signs of gender confusion, but their cathexis to the sick family, in which the mother is conspicuously absent but the preserved corpse of the grandmother is conspicuously present, has palpably arrested their development.

Hitchhiker/Chop Top and Leatherface are permanently locked in childhood. Only when Leatherface "discovers" sex in Part Two does he lose his appetite for murder.

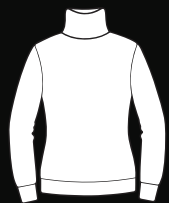
Jason's motive in *Friday the 13th Part Two* is vengeance for his dead mother in Part One. His excessive attachment toward her is manifested in his enshrining of her severed head. Ginny, who does final combat with Jason in Part Two, sees the shrine, grasps its significance (she's a psych major), and saves herself by repeating in a commanding tone, "I am your mother, Jason; put down the knife." Jason, for his part, begins to see his mother in the girl and obeys her.

In *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, Nancy, aware in advance that Freddy will be paying her a visit, plans an elaborate defense. When he enters the house, she dares him to come at her, then charges him in direct attack. As they struggle, he springs the contraptions she has set so that he is stunned by a swinging sledge hammer, jolted and half-incinerated by an electrical charge, and so on. When he rises yet again, she chases him around the house, bashing him with a chair.



**ATTRIBUTES  
AND  
APPEARANCE**

**WHO  
WORE  
IT  
BEST?**



Her turtle-neck sweater is paired with trousers.



Her flannel is paired with a neutral tank top.



Her denim jacket is paired with blue jeans or black leggings.



Laurie Strode wore jeans and a button-down shirt.



Sidney Prescott wore a jean jacket and blue tank top.



Nancy Thompson wore a pink sweater and trousers.

- 1** White t-shirt or button down shirt
- 2** Neutral nail color
- 3** Blue jeans
- 4** Shoes easy to run in and closed toe.



## MOVIE SEQUENCE

The Final Girl's actions in different movie scenes.

### I Know What You Did Last Summer 1997



The man the group of kids killed is put into Julie's trunk.



Julie runs to get her friends and returns moments later.



The trunk is revealed to be empty.



Julie then continuously screams, revealing that she may be going crazy; which is what the killer wants.

### Urban Legend 1998



The killer revealed from the final girl's perspective.



Tape on her mouth.



The killer tells her story about why she did it.



The killer is interrupted, giving the final girl time to escape.

### Halloween 1978



Laurie reaches up and stabs him.



After being stabbed in the side, Michael falls back.



She waits a moment to be sure he won't come back.



She looks at Michael's unconscious body through the broken closet.





CRITICS SAID

CRITICS SAID  
WHAT?

SAID

WHAT

Feminism seeks to explain how women find their own power in a world filled with social stereotypes and stigmas. Particularly, according to N. M. King, author of *Boy Jokes: Content Analysis of Hollywood Misogyny in Mean Girl and Slasher Movies*, feminist film theory is very much political in nature. "It seeks to expose, not to perpetuate, patriarchal practices." It is about fighting for equal rights for women as a distinct social group, equal to men in every way.

Because of the women's rights movement, feminists argue that female portrayals in the media should change. N. M. King argues, "As women assume authorial control and industrial power, and as audiences demand new images in old-fashioned genres, the representation of women should continue to change." Before the representations can change, it is first important to understand these representations of women, what they mean, and to understand where they fit into scholarly theory.

Feminist film theory emerged from an effort to find a place for women within film theory. Feminists felt a need for scholars to explore images and representations of women, as well as female spectators. According to D. Knight, author of *Women, Subjectivity, and the Rhetoric of Anti-Humanism in Feminist Film Theory*, "The examination of the representation of women in cinema, the idea that "woman" is a sign, the question whether there is such a thing as women's desire, or a feminine language, or a subject-position for women as cinema spectators-these and other topics in the history of feminist film theory have tended to emerge as responses to theory, or to conceptualizations of desire, language, spectatorship, subjectivity, and signification which are seen to be patriarchal, phallogentric, and/or phallogentric."

Traditionally, media presentations are historically counter to the ideas of feminism, particularly in film. In the beginning, feminist film critics were disappointed with the way feminist studies seemed to ignore feminist work and critiques of film. Perhaps this was a reflection of the unique status that feminist film studies occupied, as a member of both feminist studies and general film studies.

**"IT SEEKS TO  
EXPOSE, NOT  
TO PERPETUATE,  
PATRIARCHAL  
PRACTICES."**

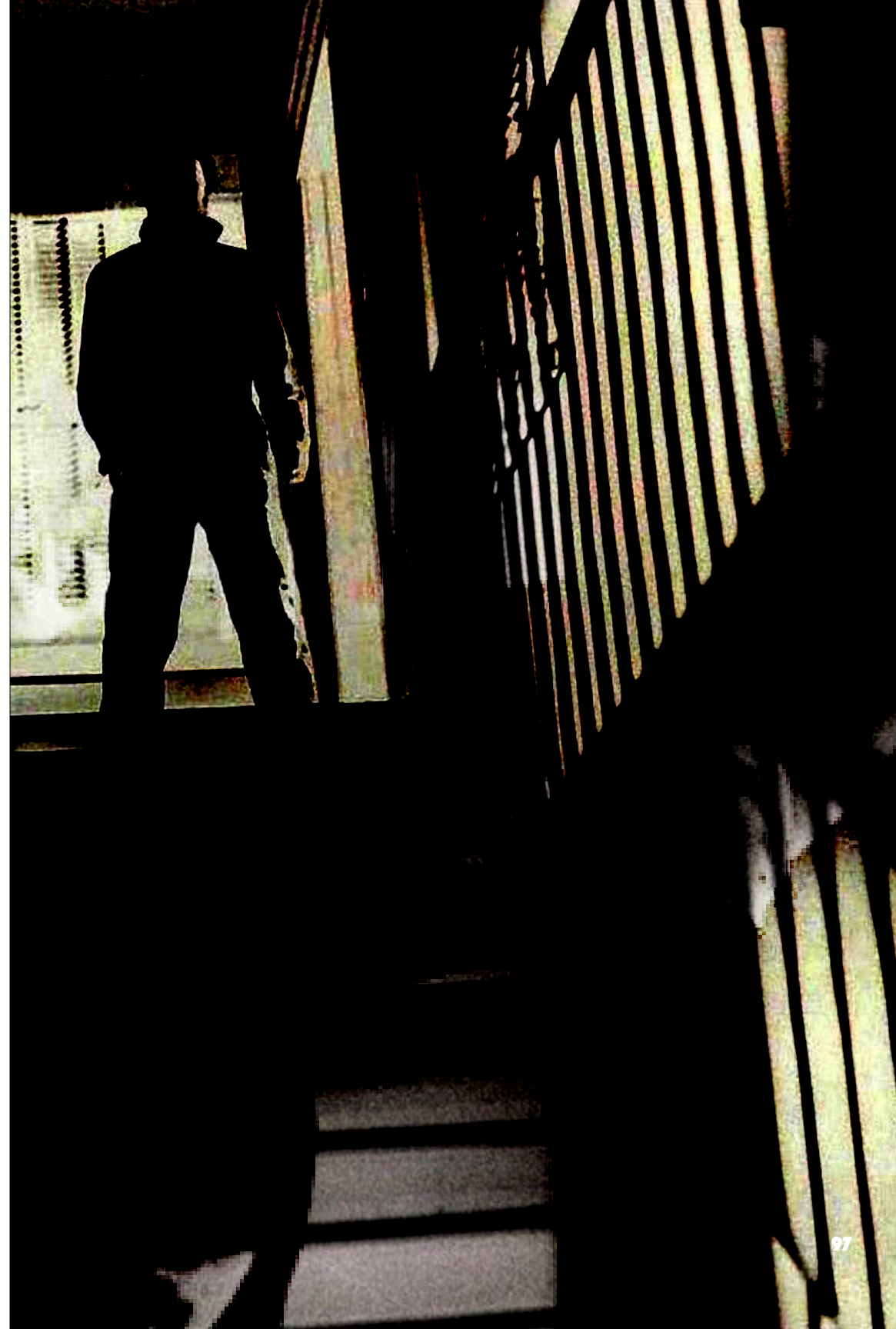
– N. M. King, *Boy Jokes*



According to recent studies, slasher films may actually be working to decrease aggression towards females in society. Some researchers think this to be a reaction of Hollywood filmmakers who no longer wish viewers to see them in the same misogynistic light as their predecessors. Carol J. Clover argues that men's reactions to the women's movement helped direct the slasher film towards stories that involved the females rescuing themselves. In fact, modern slasher films of the 1990s often portray male characters as jokes or helpless bystanders, according to King. However, this does not mean that the audience abandons the male characters in support of the female characters. On the contrary, viewers often form a bond with the killer instead.

The slasher genre was the first genre to confuse these traditional gender roles and portray women as heroes, not victims. However, "the most compelling evidence of the relative misogyny of slasher films, aside from the sheer volume of their violence, is the proportion of time spent watching young women cower, scream, or run in terror as assailants hunt them down," stated by King. Filmmakers show the hero or "final girl" as a victim at some point in the film.

This point illustrates why feminist theory claims that even though the media professionals say that portrayals of women have changed in the last few decades, stereotypes still exist, specifically portraying women as cowardly, weak, and dependent on a man. Therefore, even though on the surface the presentation seems to have improved, the deeper underlying meanings are still largely negative.



# MOVIE INDEX

The movies listed are mentioned throughout the text.

*Psycho* 1960

*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* 1974

*Halloween* 1978

*Friday the 13th* 1980

*Halloween 2* 1981

*Friday the 13th part 2* 1981

*A Nightmare on Elm Street* 1984

*Dr. Giggles* 1992

*Scream* 1996

*Scream 2* 1997

*I Know What You Did Last Summer* 1997

*Urban Legend* 1998

*I Still Know What You Did Last Summer* 1998

*Halloween Resurrection* 2002

*Freddy vs. Jason* 2003

*House of Wax* 2007

*My Bloody Valentine* 2009

*The Cabin in the Woods* 2011

*The Final Girls* 2015

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Cover and Title Page

moviestillsdb.com Mar 9, 2020  
dimensions.guide April 8, 2020

## Guide to the Kill

### Text

Wikipedia.com

### Images

fearlessapparel.com Feb 2, 2020  
pixabay.com Feb 2, 2020  
dlpng.com Feb 2, 2020  
clipart.email Feb 2, 2020  
yourprops.com Feb 2, 2020  
alamy.com Feb 2, 2020  
maskjunction.com April 20, 2020  
partycity.com Feb 2, 2020

## Behind the Mask

### Text

Wee, Valerie "Resurrecting and Updating the Teen Slasher" Heldref Publications. 2006.

"The Best Horror Directors in Film History" Ranker Film. 2019.

### Images

wallpapersafari.com Mar 10, 2020  
pinterest.com Mar 10, 2020  
autumnseyes.com Feb 1, 2020  
twitter.com April 20, 2020  
avidblogs.com Feb 6, 2020  
brentonfilm.com Feb 6, 2020  
youtube.com Mar 10, 2020

## The Token

### Text

"Racism in Horror Films." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 4 Mar. 2020.

"Black Dude Dies First." TV Tropes, tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/BlackDudeDiesFirst.

### Images

moviestillsdb.com Mar 9, 2020  
time.com Feb 12, 2020  
posterazzi.com Feb 12, 2020  
youtube.com Mar 9, 2020  
fusionmovies.to Feb 1, 2020  
jiffypopculture.blogspot.com Feb 12, 2020  
blackhorrorrmovies.com Feb 1, 2020  
vectorstock.com April 8, 2020  
superawesomevectors.com Feb 1, 2020  
screencaps.com April 2, 2020

## The Nerdy Practical Joker

### Text

Muir Kenneth, John, "Horror Films Faq", 2013.

### Images

dvdbash.com Feb 8, 2020  
imdb.com Mar 9, 2020  
welivefilm.com Feb 1, 2020  
theodysseyonline.com March 9, 2020  
pinterest.com Feb 12, 2020  
fridaythe13thfranchise.com Mar 9, 2020  
essentialhorror.blogspot.com Mar 9, 2020  
hotflick.net Mar 9, 2020  
mtv.com Feb 12, 2020  
fanpop.com April 8, 2020  
youtube.com Feb 2, 2020

## The Skeptical Jock

### Text

Muir Kenneth, John, "Horror Films Faq", 2013.

### Images

nextleatherjackets.com Mar 9, 2020  
conventionalallstars.com Mar 9, 2020  
buzzfeed.com Feb 12, 2020  
screenrush.com Feb 12, 2020  
bloody-disgusting.com Feb 12, 2020  
youtube.com Mar 9, 2020  
pinterest.com April 20, 2020  
houseofmysterioussecrets.com Mar 9, 2020  
imdb.com Mar 8, 2020  
intomore.com Feb 12, 2020  
kissthemgoodbye.net Feb 12, 2020  
fancaps.net Mar 11, 2020

## The Slutty Cheerleader

### Text

Muir Kenneth, John, "Horror Films Faq", 2013.

King-Miller, Lindsay. "A Love Letter to the Girls Who Die First in Horror Films." Electric Literature, 16 Sept. 2019.

Clover, Carol J. Men, Women and Chainsaws. B.F.I. Pub., 1992.

### Images

archive.4plebs.org Feb 8, 2020  
filmaffinity.com Feb 6, 2020  
hollywoodsuite.ca Feb 1, 2020  
houseofwax.fandom.com Feb 10, 2020  
pinterest.ph Feb 28, 2020  
badgerherald.com Feb 12, 2020  
whosdatedwho.com Mar 8, 2020  
vice.com Mar 8, 2020  
medium.com Feb 1, 2020  
kissthemgoodbye.net Mar 11, 2020  
youtube.com Feb 2, 2020

## The Nice Guy

### Text

Clover, Carol J. Men, Women and Chainsaws. B.F.I. Pub., 1992.

### Images

popsugar.com Feb 10, 2020  
netflixmovies.com Feb 10, 2020  
www4.tornadomovies.co Feb 10, 2020  
bloody-disgusting.com Feb 1, 2020  
syfy.com Feb 10, 2020  
weheartit.com Feb 10, 2020  
giphy.com March 6, 2020  
spotern.com March 6, 2020  
ti.fanpop.com March 6, 2020  
kissthemgoodbye.net Mar 13, 2020  
movie-screencaps.com Mar 13, 2020  
youtube.com Feb 2, 2020

## The Final Girl

### Text

Muir Kenneth, John, "Horror Films Faq", 2013.

Clover, Carol J. Men, Women and Chainsaws. B.F.I. Pub., 1992.

### Images

twitter.com Feb 6, 2020  
thetexaschainsawmasacre.com Feb 8, 2020  
pinterest.com Feb 2, 2020  
bfi.org.uk Mar 5, 2020  
bloody-disgusting.com Feb 8, 2020  
bbc.com Feb 8, 2020  
horrornews.net Feb 1, 2020  
facebook.com Mar 1, 2020  
imdb.com Mar 5, 2020  
riseupdaily.com Mar 1, 2020  
kissthemgoodbye.net Mar 5, 2020  
movie-screencaps.com Feb 2, 2020

## Critics Said What?

### Text

Brewer, Chad, "The stereotypic portrayal of women in slasher films: then versus now" (2009). LSU Master's Theses. 56.

### Images

cinephiliabeyond.org April 3, 2020  
bloody-disgusting.com Feb 19, 2020  
thedrewseum.tumblr.com April 11, 2020  
twitter.com April 11, 2020

## Textures

4-designers.com Feb 22, 2020  
retrosupply.co April 1, 2020  
onlygfx.com Mar 27, 2020  
reddit.com Mar 27, 2020  
blog.spoongraphics.co.uk April 1, 2020

## Fonts

Phosphate – fontsempire.com  
LateNights – dafont.com  
Avenir - adobe font library

# THANK YOU

Thank you to my family for their consistent moral support, whether through wise words or good food. To my close friends for helping me push through the toughest obstacles. To my cat Sasha for dealing with my late nights when she just wanted to sleep. Thank you to the Graphic Design Department for teaching me how to see the world as a designer.

And last, but never least, to myself. You kicked ass!

This project was produced as partial fulfillment of the requirements of DESN 402, Senior Studio II, in the Graphic Design Program, The University of the Arts, Spring 2019; Sherry Lefevre and John Connolly, faculty advisors, and Nancy Mayer, critic.



**THE END...**

