

20th Century Slasher Films

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American Culture Studies Topics Course: 20th Century Slasher Films

The horror genre remains one of the most popular film genres amongst audiences. Within that, the slasher film is one of the most recognizable and prolific subgenres. Though its popularity began to die out in the late twentieth century, from the release of Halloween in 1978 to Scream 3 in 2000, the American audience devoured the slasher film, with major franchises such as A Nightmare on Elm Street and Friday the 13th dominating film screens. While many film critics and theorists have discounted the slasher subgenre as repetitious and devoid of meaning, the reality is that the slasher film is a reactionary subgenre that had much to say in regard to the time period in which it was most popular. In this course, we will look at many major slasher films released in the twentieth century by examining the timely themes and topics that they contained. In doing so, we will see how these slasher films were influenced by major happenings in the world, as well as how American culture (amongst others) was influenced by the films themselves.

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