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A Nightmarishly Good Time

Research Topic

New Line Cinema's *Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors* appeared at the time a revolutionary horror film with great practical and special effects. It influenced a great many things in today's culture while still touching on the sensitive topic of teen suicide and repressed sexuality, which was considered taboo at the time.

Context/Background

When *Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors* was released back in 1987, it astounded audiences and critics alike with its life-like practical effects and shocked with its special effects. Examples of this include Freddie Kruger's (Robert England) body make-up, the overdose of Taryn (Jennifer Rubin), as well as the five televisions that were used in the scene of Jennifer's (Penelope Sudrow) death some had fake glass, others had limbs specifically built for lifting the young actress off the ground. The film uses a wide range of different cinematic tricks such as stop-motion "Stop motion is a technique in animation where static objects are photographed as they are moved incrementally and then those photographs are shown one after the other very quickly to create the illusion of fluid movement." (Schmidt, Georg) and

claymation are just a few to name that gave a wide range of cinematography to an otherwise amazing film.

The cultural impact this movie had was far reaching, between comic books, video games and even a television series that ran for two seasons as just some of the few things that have implemented into today's pop culture. It is still one of the top 3 highest grossing horror movie franchises next to *Friday the 13th* and *Halloween*. It even spawned a holiday known as Freddie Krueger Day in Los Angeles, California on September 13th 1991.

To achieve an R-rating with the Motion Picture Association formerly known as the MPAA, production had to be modified or even had to cut certain death scenes short just to achieve an R-rating. A lot of the topics the movie touched on were actually considered taboo at the time. Making the material hard to use in the film. Teenage suicide and repressed sexuality “Although the return of the repressed, especially repressed sexually, is clearly the major theme in many stalker movies.” (Heba, Gray) being the most sensitive subject that the director used without getting into too much detail without offending audiences.

Synopsis

The best of the Elm Street sequels, this creepy, surreal fantasy features terrific effects, a fine young cast, and an air of grim fatalism that sets it apart from its giggling successors. The film starts with Kristen (Patricia Arquette) whose nightmares leads to a slashed wrist which looks suspiciously like a suicide attempt. She is placed in a hospital psychiatric ward by her mother with a group of six other troubled teens who all dream of the same horribly burned man trying to kill them. Perhaps the most unusual thing about this picture, however, is the unexpected depths of sadness running through it. There are some achingly sweet moments in this otherwise

frightening film which, though not disruptive, are impossible to analyze. The first and most bizarre is Nancy's (Heather Langenkamp) reintroduction at the beginning of the film, which inexplicably causes most viewers to get misty-eyed, and there are several similar scenes throughout the story.

This is a film in which a great deal of care was obviously lavished on certain scenes. The sets are outstanding as well as the performances by the actors. The results are well worth repeated viewings and prove that sequels do not have to be inferior films. It is simply *A Nightmarishly Good Time*.

“Nightmare on elm street 3: Dream Warriors.” Directed by Chuck Russell,
Performances by Robert Englund, Heather Langenkamp and Patricia Arquette, New Line
Cinema, 1987.

Heba, Gary. *“Everyday Nightmares.”* *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, vol. 23, no.
3, Fall 1995, p. 106.

“The Origins & Evolution Of Stop Motion.” Youtube, Uploaded by Rockall-Schmidt,
Georg. 6th April 2017.