

# Scary movies not as scary as the real world

## COMMENTARY

By Joe Shearer

A few weeks ago, I commented in jest to my cousin's Facebook invitation to see "Halloween II," that Riley and I would be there.

This caused something of a stir in my family, then sighs of relief when I announced that my 4-year-old son was not going to see a slasher flick.

I've long argued scary movies for kids. I know many people would gasp at such an idea. Horror films make kids violent, and are just another sign that society is rolling downhill in a barrel bound for hell, right?

Posh, I say.

Film is a reflection of societal values. That's why the "good guys" always win, and the wicked lose.

What better reflects the values parents should impart to their children? Typical victims are the bad kids who drink, smoke, do drugs, and have premarital sex. The good one defeats the monster and lives on. Scared straight, indeed.

Scary movies are modern-day fairy tales, no more grisly or ghastly than "Hansel and Gretel,"

where a woman who eats children is pushed into an oven by kids, or "Red Riding Hood," where a wolf eats Red's grandmother, and is hacked to death by a woodsman.

My own mom and stepdad used to terrorize me with yarns about goblins who would take me away if I wasn't good.

The goal of these stories? To make kids behave.

Does this mean my kids are watching splatter flicks instead of "Yo Gabba Gabba"? Of course not. Riley, my oldest, isn't quite ready for that yet. But when the time comes, I absolutely will allow them.

Why? Because the real world, with its predators in sheep's clothing, are scarier than Jason or Michael Myers. They should, as Michael Jackson once said, fear us more than any ghoul could ever dare try.



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