Horror Criticism

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Horror tropes from the 1980s have generally subjected women to sex objects who were then punished for their behavior; however, in several instances, those same films have empowered women as the “final girls” who fought back against the killers and ultimately survived the films. Movies such as *Friday the 13th*, *Halloween*, and *The Slumber Party Massacre* embody these concepts. While female characters such as Marcy in *Friday the 13th* and Linda in *Halloween* are seemingly killed as a consequence of being sexually open and active, their counterparts, including Laurie Strode in *Halloween*, Alice in *Friday the 13th*, and Valerie in *The Slumber Party Massacre* all readily attack the killer without hesitation, and seek to protect themselves and their friends from the murderous onslaughts at hand. These characters and contexts prove that, although women were often stereotyped in 80s horror films as being “easy” for being sexually free and then reprimanded for it by falling victim to the killers, other female characters in the same movies demonstrated strength and power even when faced with seemingly hopeless odds of escaping their fates.

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