

New twist in sequel can't save villain, film

Movie Review

By BRIAN SHELTON
Staff Writer

In 1984, a low-budget horror film called *Nightmare on Elm Street* was released, and it became an instant classic. Unlike other horror movies of the time, which basically just had mask-wearing psychopaths mowing down procreating teens, *Nightmare on Elm Street* offered an intriguing plot about the power of dreams and showcased a villain named Freddy Krueger who was not only frightening but charismatic as well. The film demanded further installments, and, sure enough, a sequel was released a year later.

Not only did the second film make more money than the original, it also turned Freddy Krueger into a genuine media superstar and virtually guaranteed that the sequels wouldn't stop at just one. In fact, for a while there, New Line Cinema churned them out once a year, each one taking the series in a slightly different direction.

The direction was a positive one in 1987's *Nightmare on Elm Street 3: The Dream Warriors*, but, after a while, the series began to overstep its boundaries. The later films (especially Part 5) lacked the creativity that was prevalent in the first few movies, and the once invincible Freddy Krueger began to look washed up. *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*, the sixth and presumably last of the series continues this disintegration and is easily the worst of the lot.

It does not bode well for a film when it loses all of its credibility in its first 15 seconds but *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare* accomplishes just that. Right before the action begins, a message is flashed on the screen that says every teen resident of a town called Springwood has been slaughtered by Freddy Krueger except for one survivor who is fleeing for his life.

Let's back up for a minute and ponder how it is possible a town could let every one of its pubescent citizens croak. Wouldn't you think maybe after the body count reached 1000 or so the town leaders would get together and call the National Guard or something? Wouldn't you, if you happened to be a teen and all your friends were dropping like flies, maybe put a little pressure on the old parental units to pack up the U-Haul and get the hell out of there? And hey, where's *60 Minutes* (or at the very least, *Hard Copy*) during all this?

The only apparent reason for the removal of Springwood's teenagers is to set the plot in motion. Freddy decides, instead of resting on his laurels or taking up

a hobby like basket-weaving, he wants to continue his trade of killing teens in their dreams. The only way he can do this is by branching out into another town, so he packs up his glove and his green and red sweater and proclaims, "Every town has an Elm Street." Leaving isn't as simple as it seems, though, and Freddy soon realizes the only way out is to find the child he fathered when he was still in human form.

Freddy a daddy? Doesn't it seem a little late in the series to add a detail like this? Actually it is, and the whole business of him using his child as some sort of portal really doesn't make a lot of sense either. The only reason I can really see for dropping a bombshell like this is to tick-off the audience by making them try to guess which of the characters is the chip off Freddy's block.

Is it that last surviving teen of Springwood who somehow ends up in a mental hospital in another town? Is it one of the three kids the teen meets at the hospital? Is it Maggie, the psychologist who keeps having demented dreams about a water tower and looks vaguely like Madonna on a bad day? They all end up back in Springwood, and, basically, the one who doesn't die in a weird, bizarre dream sequence is the one who used to call Freddy "pops".

The dream sequences, usually a highlight of the films, are, for the most part, weak, boring and over-long. The most horrific thing they could come up with is Freddy scratching a chalkboard with his metallic nails, and, disturbingly, the dreams make light of serious subjects (drugs, hearing disability) for no apparent reason.

After most of the characters are dispatched through their nightmares, the predictable confrontation occurs between Freddy and his offspring. You would think this battle, filmed in a form of 3-D called "FreddyVision," if done right, would perhaps make up for the sorry 70 minutes before it. Alas, we'll never know because the conclusion is just as disappointing as the rest. The 3-D effects are worthless, and the final demise of Freddy seems way too simple to be convincing. If one wanted to, they could easily bring Freddy back to life. So don't be too surprised to see *Freddy's Dead: We Really Mean It This Time* sometime in the immediate future.

The *Nightmare on Elm Street* series burst onto the scene with a bang, but unfortunately, leaves it with a whimper. The sixth film offers none of the creativity the early entries had and shows even good ideas can only be taken so far. RIP Freddy, and, no offense, but this time I hope you stay dead. F.



Comedian Mike Warnke will be performing tomorrow night at the Trinity Baptist Church.

Comedian not typical Christian evangelist

By SHANNON BAYNHAM
Staff Writer

What do you get when you cross an ex-satanist high priest, a cardio-pulmonary technician and a comedian? One who does stand up while performing open heart surgery by the light of the full moon?

Nope. You get Mike Warnke, a Christian Comedian Evangelist, who was at one time each of these occupations and will now be in concert Sept. 26, at Trinity Baptist Church.

Now don't let the words "Christian Comedian Evangelist" fool you. They are not a contradiction in terms nor are they a huge sign flashing "Warning — Boring, Nonpertinent (yet predictable) Material Ahead." Warnke's past history as an ex-satanist high priest, drug addict, pusher and Vietnam Marine Corps Medic provide an edge to his material that may blow any preconceived notions about the occult, not to mention your funny bone, away.

Warnke's past practices in the occult delved deep. Before the age of 20, Warnke was the Master Counselor of a satanist group, which had been introduced to him through his drug addiction and selling.

In his book, *The Satan Seller*, Warnke describes in detail his involvement in the occult, his conversion to Christianity and the numerous events in between that impacted his life.

Now Warnke's focus is on Warnke Ministries. It is an organization staffed to work with people who

are into drugs, the occult or in prison. Warnke Ministries also incorporates a Concert Production Staff that handle's concert bookings and publicity.

But don't think that if you're not involved in any of these three — drugs, the occult or prison — that Warnke's message has no relevance. One of the major strengths behind Warnke's message is his radical relevance.

Warnke stands now a man of 44 with a family and ministry, but keep in mind that all of his actions and involvement in the occult were during college. He was seeking some form of truth, some type of fulfillment.

Sound familiar? These are topics and issues not too foreign amidst college discussion. As Warnke recounts in his books, cassettes and videos, his seeking wasn't satisfied until his conversion when he sought Christ.

Even if you just go for the laughs, an evening with Mike Warnke is not a wasted one. Warnke's television appearances include "Larry King Live," "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and being an adviser for ABC's News Magazine "20/20." He has spoken to numerous audiences all over the world including the Queen of Denmark and the King of Sweden.

But you don't have to provide any documents of royalty to hear Warnke. The option is open tomorrow night at The Trinity Baptist Church in Cayce, SC. The concert starts at 7:30 p.m. and the cost is \$3. For more information, call 791-0440.



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"In a school zone, Mr. Barnes?"

"Yes, sir."

"After your car mauled three children, Mr. Barnes?"

"Yes..., sir."

"Because you were banging your head?"

"Yes, sir."

"Punk rock, Mr. Barnes."

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