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Do you want to play Truth or Dare?

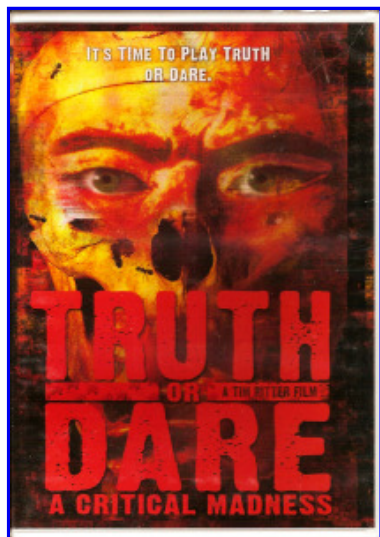


[Jayson](#)

Jul 14, 2010

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Upon catching his wife in bed with a friend, Michael Strauber (John Brace) suffers a severe psychotic break and goes out strange. Locked away in a mental facility after found slashing himself up in an hallucinatory state, Strauber continues his sadistic games of truth or dare with imaginary friends in seclusion. But now the damaged man is out by his own murderous will and still hasn't forgotten the lecherous whore at home...

Finally, then-19 year old Tim Ritter's 1986 indie horror opus, **Truth or Dare?: A Critical Madness**, has arrived again on a DVD re-release from Sun Rosa Studios. The writer/director went on to helm the hairy suburban freakout **Killing Spree** the following year, but *Truth or Dare* is the pinnacle of his powers.

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Despite cheapjack allusions to John Carpenter's **Halloween**, Ritter crafts a durable slasher that's satisfyingly violent and competent. Brace, who only went on to a bit part on *Cheers*, serves up some palpable psychosis that anchors and makes the film unexpectedly compelling. It's still a schlocky no-budgeter; so expect some needless padding, cheeseball dialogue, and even dumb keystone kop-type bumbling from detectives trying to find Strauber post escape. Ritter subsequently mined similar topics set forth in this offering, but this is only one really worth seeking out. In a sea of '80s cheapies produced solely for lurid VHS art to move ultimately disappointed rentals, *Truth or Dare?* pulls far ahead of the usual crop and deserves more recognition for its boldness irrespective of budget.

So it's refreshing to have the feature readily available on DVD once again. Initially released on tape by Peerless Films, Sub Rosa released an overdue special edition DVD in 2003 that went out-of-print and soon afterward demanded high prices. Odeon Entertainment then released a bareboned disc in Britain that also went OOP and similarly soared upwards in price. Sub Rosa have thankfully just re-issued their SE with new cover art and solid white case (*above*) featuring a commentary from Ritter, *Reflections on Truth or Dare* featurette, and trailers for *Truth or Dare 1-3*. Unfortunately, the disc's 1.85:1 letterboxed transfer leaves much to be desired looking either from a bad video master or VHS. Although for ten bucks the total package comes recommended.

Here's captures from Sub Rosa and British Odeon disc just to compare. Either edition is much of a looker, but the Odeon suffers from some extremely bad compression despite being unmatted. If you don't care for supplements, keep your eye out for a cheap copy of the VHS at those yard sales...

Sub Rosa SE



Odeon unmatted



Tags: [Sub Rosa](#), [Tim Ritter](#), [Truth or Dare: A Critical Madness](#)



Written by: [Jayson](#) | [Visit Website](#)

With 2.4% of the Northern Hemisphere's plastic quantity in his basement, Jayson is a man with a dangerous preoccupation of collecting, watching, and obsessing over everything horror on moldy Betamax tapes to shiny new Blu-rays. Being all stealthy, he also has a knack for wrangling in esoteric tapes both online and on location. Beware. When he's not stemming the tide of the Sprayer, his blog details movies you've probably never heard of, on dead formats of yore, for prices that would make you think he was on crack.

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