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Film Review: The Bucks County Massacre (2010)

Posted on 08/14/2012 by Bruce Kooker 2 comments



SYNOPSIS:

"The Bucks County Massacre" was compiled from video footage found at the scene of a horrible crime. The editors would like to express their sympathies to the families of the victims. They would also like to express their gratitude to the local authorities for their involvement and cooperation on this project. The public release of "The Bucks County Massacre" is done with the express consent of the families of the victims and all authorities involved in this case. It is the hope of all involved that this truthful rendering of the events will bring forth new witnesses or information that will allow for this case to finally be closed.

A group of friends get together for a 25th birthday party at a remote house in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. After someone goes missing and the police search the premises to no avail, the remaining party-goers are left to wait until morning. With virtually no cell phone reception and no land line, the situation escalates when one frantic friend takes matters into his own hands and ventures off in the woods to find his girlfriend. What they don't know is that someone or some thing is hunting them one by one

REVIEW:

It's no secret that I am a fan of the documentary-style of filmmaking. When done effectively, like the many one-take, 10+ minute shots in "REC", I consider it to be a very powerful tool. When I went to the website for **Bucks County Massacre** (also known as "**Bucks County**") and saw the proclamation, in a severe Roger Corman-like scrawl, that this film is the amalgamation of three heavy hitters in the cinema verite genre, I was skeptical that this tool had been put to good use. As it turns out, my skepticism was warranted.



The movie starts out like **Cloverfield** did – with a party for a dear friend being documented for posterity -but the similarities end there. The film drags on a bit before the action starts, similar to all three installments of the Paranormal Activity franchise, but there was nothing that reminded me of the creepy subtlety that makes those films work. Finally, the only thing Blair Witchy about BCM is that it is done in the documentary style. So right off the bat, the tagline on their website isn't exactly accurate.



The problem with BCM is that it had a short way to go and took the long way to get there. As I mentioned, the film begins with party footage that included: a torturously long beer pong scene; moments I was sure was going to devolve into one of those college orgies I've been hearing about; character development about a guy whose dad died, a chick with cancer, an Afghanistan veteran with a bum knee, etc. Interspersed in this party footage are interviews of families of the victims who cite anecdotes about their sons', daughters', brothers', sisters' lives.

This is clearly supposed to involve you in the characters' plight and build tension, but then it returns to more ambiguous party footage that doesn't move the film forward at all. I found myself getting bored. That may seem kind of harsh but it took about 36 minutes before the first real incident took place, and the movie is only 83 minutes long. After that there is 17 minutes of "someone is missing", then 11 minutes of "searching for and

speculating about someone missing”, which leaves 19 minutes to wrap it up – which they did with something I feel like I read in a Jack Ketchum novel on a couple of different occasions. Have you seen Offspring?



The bottom line is that this genre has a whole bunch of haters. I'm not one of them, but I do think **Bucks County Massacre** is the kind of film that makes people hate the genre. It's not a lot of payoff for the time and attention invested. In the films mentioned in the tagline the audience was rewarded with a lost and scared giant alien in Cloverfield, a mysterious evil with a personal agenda in the P.A. films, and the privilege of witnessing history when having their minds blown by the innovative **Blair Witch Project**. Bucks County Massacre provided me with none of that. Perhaps the tagline should say “About as good as ‘The Last Exorcism!’” and leave it at that.

Bucks County Massacre (2010)



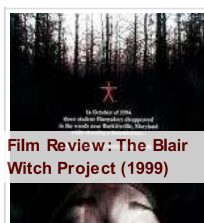
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2 Responses to Film Review: The Bucks County Massacre (2010)



Horrorboy says:

09/08/2012 at 10:55 pm

You must not be to Familiar with Bucks County.It is one of the largest counties in the Country known for Supernatural Activity just ask Kevin Bacon or Tom Holland or even M.Night Shyamalan.I cant even think of another film that compares to this one.It has all 3 of the movie concepts from Blair Witch/Paranormal and Cloverfield.Not one Film out today is like The Bucks County Massacre.

We all know about Chronicle,Project X but those “Real” movies are far from real.The fact that BCM is found footage and people were killed alone shatters the Attempt made by Chronicle/Project X to make a “Real” Film,BCM was very enjoyable and more believable than a Giant Godzilla creature taking over NYC,kids with super powers or people walking/talking in their sleep.

At the end of the day BCM leaves me thinking and Wondering what on earth killed those people,I'm on a mission to find out...

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mockumento says:

09/09/2012 at 5:41 pm

Horrorboy, I agree with you on a couple of points. I had the pleasure of watching this incredible film at a sneak preview at the County Theater in Doylestown PA sometime in the summer of 2010. First off, Paranormal Activity was a movie about a guy and a girl couple who were boring and talking about nothing for about 1 hour and 15 minutes, and then maybe 5 minutes of a couple of lame ass "scares". If P.A. made \$300 million, then the Bucks County Massacre should make \$1 Billion.

Here's what I took home from the movie premiere I went to. First of all, the beginning party scene was not too long and boring, it was funny, had depth, I got to know the characters, and I related to them.....which did NOT happen in P.A. or Blair Witch, etc.

Secondly, it wasn't a gore / shriek fest...it had emotion, intelligence, and pure unadulterated suspense and terror...it had me at the edge of my seat the whole time. I loved the cinematography, the characters, and the setting (house in the woods). And I loved that the movie took place in a creepy house AND in the woods, not one or the other as in P.A. or Blair Witch.

Last but not least, my favorite part of the movie was the fact that I got to see a few glimpses of what looked like a mutant / human / vampire thing.....what the hell was that??? I felt so bad for the kids when they were getting ripped to shreds...especially the hot girls.....ugh my stomach turned!!

I already pre-ordered my copy on Amazon.com – and I recommend this movie to anyone who wants to see the ultimate "found footage" movie of all time!!

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