



The Scream

John Skipp , Craig Spector

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Rock 'n' Roll. Hell. Two great tastes that taste great together. Long before Elvis gyrated on the Sullivan Show or the Beatles toiled the smoky red-light bars of Hamburg, music has been sowing the seeds of liberation. Or damnation. With each new generation the edge of rebellion pushed farther. Rhythms quickened. Volume increased. Lyrics coarsened. The rules continued to be broken, until it seemed that there were no rules at all.

And as waves of teens cranked it up and poured it on, parents built walls of accusation to explain their offspring's seeming corruption. Sex and drugs, demon worship and violence are the effects. Music is the cause. Or so the self-styled guardians of morality would have us believe.

Meet The Scream. Just your average everyday mega-cult band. Their music is otherworldly. Their words are disturbing. Their message is unholy. Their fans are legion. And they're not kidding. They're killing. Themselves. Each other. Everyone. Their gospel screams from the lips of babes. Their backbeat has a body count. And their encore is just the warm-up act to madness beyond belief.

It emerged from a war-torn jungle, where insanity was just another word for survival. It arrived in America with an insatiable lust for power and the means to fulfill it. In the amplified roar of arena applause there beats the heart of absolute darkness.

The Scream Details

Date : Published June 1st 2001 by Stealth Press (first published 1987)

ISBN : 9781588810229

Author : John Skipp , Craig Spector

Format : Hardcover 448 pages

Genre : Horror, Splatterpunk, Music, Fiction

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From Reader Review The Scream for online ebook

Twerking To Beethoven says

I didn't like "The Scream" one bit.

I'm an eighties kid, alright. One of my all time favourite movies happens to be Trick or Treat , a monumental, humongous piece of crap of a horror movie about a snuffed rockstar coming back from the dead because some bullied high-school kid spins his records backwards. Pure, unadulterated & delicious eighties cheese, boyos. Check this out: <https://youtu.be/pjOnfKvqGEQ> ("Gonna drive my long steel missile down on your love channel")

Even though "Trick or Treat" is so utterly stupid watching it will make you a total idiot (and that's the main reason I love it so much), it features one of the most magnificent soundtracks evah, this:

Fastway's "Trick or Treat" is an underrated hard rock masterpiece from the eighties, featuring Flogging Molly's Dave King's pipes and "Fast" Eddie Clarke's smoking stratocaster.

That said, I went through "The Scream" hoping to find the same sort of mindless Trick-or-Treat fun, but was sorely mistaken.

Unfortunately this book is a mess, and not in a good way. In my worthless opinion, it would have been a whole lot better without all the flashbacks, the pointless Vietnam bits, and the couple of hundred pages dealing with the interior turnoil of the characters.

Two disappointed stars.

Ed [Redacted] says

After reading THE CLEANUP by Skipp and Spector, I was really looking forward to this one.

Unfortunately, I was treated to a big pile of "rock and roll" fetishism and the type of stereotypical Vietnam veteran characters so common in the 80's. despite all of this, S&S are clearly talented writers. The writing is crisp as ever and several scenes in the book are quite effective. Unfortunately the whole plot left me cold, and the deeper themes I enjoyed so much in THE CLEANUP were missing. I had already ordered a copy of THE LIGHT AT THE END prior to starting this one. I hope it is more like THE CLEANUP than THE SCREAM.

James Ranger says

As always, Skipp and Spector NEVER fail. This book is so well written I am certain other writers of their generation hate them for being so good. And I don't blame them! The authors know how to deep dive into emotions and characterization. The people in the book were my family by the end. I read this every few

years. Awesome book

Todd Charlton says

Rock'n'roll and its bastard child Heavy Metal were more conversational in the 1980's than at any other time thanks to organisations like Tipper Gore's Parents Music Resource Center and countless TV evangelists. John Skipp and Craig Spector made this fact the foundation of their third novel *The Scream*. The Scream is a Heavy Metal band led by an impossibly beautiful woman; the ultimate femme fatal. Jake Hamer is a rocker as well, but his group is less extreme. He publicly takes on the wowzers, led by Rev Dan Furniss, with an event called Rock Aid; like Live Aid but aimed at saving rock'n'roll instead of starving children.

It turns out *The Scream* is on the bill and sixty something people are murdered at the event. There's something very wrong with *The Scream* and their fans.

Heavy Metal is almost always associated with the devil and evil and Skipp and Spector make this a reality with *The Scream*. Jake is a campaigner for reason but when things get demonically real he is forced to fight the monster with the indirect help of Walker, *The Scream*'s manager who has a crisis of conscience.

Were the wowzers right all along?

I wanted to like this novel more than I did. *The Scream* is written in the authors' folksy; let me tell you a story, informal way, which is good. But it goes on a bit long. And given what happens later perhaps the title of the book should have been Napalm Death; but of course we already have one of those.

Add the occasional Vietnam flashback to the marching mothers and we are slap bang in the middle of the topical eighties. Perhaps *The Scream* hasn't aged as well as the classic *The Light at the End*?

Robert Burnett says

The defining 1980s splatterpunk novel and the pinnacle of Skipp and Spector's collaboration. What I'd give for a copy of *The Scream*'s "Critical Mass" CD! One of the most entertaining horror novels ever written.

Dan says

This is a far more complex book than any of the tag-lines would lead you to believe. Yes, it's an incredibly visceral horror story set in the world of rock-and-roll, but there are far deeper subjects that get addressed and discussed throughout the book.

One of the most obvious - and controversial - is that of abortion. One of the side characters struggles with the keeping of a pregnancy in light of her career, her history, her temperament, and her relationship with the father. Because of the nature of the book, the extremes of both sides get put before us, and we can see the ugliness - and maybe the truths - of each side.

Other issues presented: rock-and-roll music as a controversial entertainment. This book was published in 1988, in the aftermath of the PMRC's congressional hearing and sticker parade. (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parents...> for more info). Again, the book shows both sides of the argument (with obvious partiality, but still relatively fair, if not overly sympathetic to the opposing side) in both good and negative lights. And that's kind of the point.

If you take anything to its polar extremes, it turns bad, no matter which way you slice it. In this particular example, you have rock-and-roll music (an outdated term, to be sure, but you get what I'm talking about: "the music your parents hate") which, in and of itself, is neutral. But you have extreme right-wing conservatives, typically claiming the Christian moniker, who want ALL rock music outlawed, because themes in "that type of music" run counter to their way of life and way of thinking. Standing in the middle ground, for story purposes, are musicians who are fighting for their livelihood. They recognize that what the right-wingers want to do is complete censorship for control purposes, and they want none of that. They know that rock music is cathartic, and downright necessary for human growth - rebellion aiding in the breaking away from mommy and daddy. On the far other side, in the story, are the centerpiece band THE SCREAM. Their goals are far more sinister, closer in scope to what the far-right wingers believe ALL rockers are about: the destruction of the youth of the world.

The book also deals with post traumatic stress disorder, both war-induced and tragedy-induced, and how people with this disorder react and cope with breakouts in their own personal ways.

I've read this book a couple of times, and as usual, I had forgotten about certain aspects from the previous reading. Maybe as I grow older, I see certain things from a different perspective.

Again, fair warning, the authors of this book were part of the "splatterpunk" movement of the mid-80's to early 90's, and as such, this story drips with blood. There is no pulling away from cringe-worthy scenes, no pulling punches. In fact, the camera plays pretty steady on the most violent scenes (you'll never look at a staple gun quite the same way again).

If you can handle that kind of gore, and don't have issue with themes touching on the satanic and blasphemous, then I recommend this book to you. If you do have issues with those things, I strongly recommend you not come near this book. You will be highly offended, even though there is some very good passages regarding God and Good fighting Evil and faith and salvation. Ultimately, it's your choice.

And that's kinda the point.

Adam Wilson says

The Scream by John Skipp and Craig Spector wasn't much of a fun read for me. I loved the descriptions of the band members, fans, and the life styles of both, but for

the most part the book felt like a mess of undicisive writing. Half the time I couldn't figure out what the hell was going on and when I did think I knew what was

happening I didn't know why. I hated the dream-like quality of this novel. Perhaps it was the purpose of the authors to write a book that felt like it was on the same

mind-altering drugs as its characters but I didn't like it at all. I have an intense dislike for dreamy books. It did have some pretty detailed descriptions of violence

and an interesting enough ending full of explosions and death with a soundtrack of metal, but the trip to it isn't worth it. In short, I loved the idea of this book

more than the book itself. Like David J. Schow's *The Kill Riff*, I was very willing to give the book a try because of its dealing with metal music (something that I love

to play and listen to), but I think they both could have been done much better. A good idea performed in a bad way.

Albert says

Ok I guess. This is my fourth Skipp/Spector novel and so far I'm all over the place when rating these guys. This is the second book of theirs where I was completely indifferent towards all the characters, and to me forming some kind of emotional attachment to a character goes a long way towards making or breaking a novel. I thought the story itself was pretty unique though and somewhat interesting, and I had no problem with the writing style.

Todd Charlton says

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Brian Surratt says

Read this MANY moons ago, senior yeah of high school I think, on the recommendation of a friend. Very intense, very visceral, very graphic. The characters are fairly well developed and diverse in a complex story.

A few common tropes for the late 80's (Vietnam, heavy metal satanism, single mothers, corrupt televangelists, the works). But that's what the story is about, taping into the absurd paranoia of the time. It literally is a parent's rock and roll nightmare.

If you were going to compare this book to a roller coaster, it would be one of those rides that launch you from 0 to 60 in no time flat and hardly slow down at all. The opening scenes set a burning pace and the climax is a rock and roll spectacular that you could only find in Ziggy Stardust's most horrific fantasies.

At 18, I'd have called rated this a 6 on 5 star scale. 20+ years later, I'll guess my teen-aged self was overly stimulated by the sex, drugs and rock and roll and call it a 4. But it is definitely a book I'll NEVER forget.

Carson Moore says

wild and mysoginistic but bloody and relatively well-written compared to books like The Sharing.

M. Dixon says

For the most part, I found this a rather entertaining horror novel. The end though was spectacular!

Scott Waldie says

Has all the visceral gross out factor of their other collaborations, and could probably be considered one of the better heavy metal or rock and roll horror novels, but it felt overlong and I didn't care about the Christian/Antichristian elements, the 'safe' rocker lead characters or the other commentary here on issues like abortion. Meanders too much and thus dilutes all the good stuff. Doesn't hold a candle to their other books like THE BRIDGE or THE LIGHT AT THE END.

Grady Hendrix says

Lurid and over the top, but also features a giant monster who eats people with her vagina, and the first female character is introduced when we peer up her skirt while she's onstage. So there's that.

Craig DiLouie says

Recently finished THE SCREAM by John Skipp and Craig Spector and was amazed at how talented these guys are. They can tell one hell of a story. In THE SCREAM, Jake, a Vietnam vet and leader of a heavy metal band, jousts with Christian fundamentalists campaigning against what they see as Satanic rock music. What neither understands is that mega-cult band The Scream is actually using their music to plant the seeds of slaughter and literally raise Hell. Grounded in rich detail about the rock industry in the '80s and a deep background in the hell of the Vietnam War, THE SCREAM is an outrageous trip bringing together heavy metal bands fighting Christian fundamentalists fighting the Devil. If you're familiar with their stories you already know that Skipp and Spector do their homework, pour their hearts into their characters, and lavish their stories with tons of gore and mayhem. Lots of fun. Recommended.

