

PSYCHOLOGY

Movies' Effect Depends On Mood of Audience

► WHETHER VIOLENCE in movies and TV programs arouses anger and aggressive reactions in children depends on whether the children are already angry and in a fighting mood when they see the picture.

This is the conclusion from a study of movies' effects on 10- and 11-year-old children. The study was reported by Eleanor E. Maccoby, Harry Levin and Bruce M. Selya of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., at the American Psychological Association meeting in San Francisco.

The children were all sixth graders. They were shown a chapter from a serial movie of the spy thriller type, but one group had previously been made angry and resentful. This was done through spelling bees in which one team was consistently given easy words, while the other team was consistently given hard words at about the ninth, instead of sixth, grade level.

The members of the team getting all hard words protested that the spelling bee was unfair. When asked, a week later, what they remembered of the movie, the victims of the unfair spelling test remembered more violent, aggressive scenes than the children who had easy words in the test.

Science News Letter, September 17, 1955

Questions

ENGINEERING—What are advantages of jet engines for passenger cars? p. 186.

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HERPETOLOGY—What is the oldest living snake in the United States? p. 185.

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MARINE BIOLOGY—Where are coelacanths being sought by scientists? p. 182.

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PUBLIC SAFETY—What features are being incorporated in a "dream safety car"? p. 181.

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WILDLIFE—How much money has the United States netted in fur seals since 1910? p. 180.

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Photographs: Cover, Convair; p. 179, U. S. Navy; pp. 181 and 183, British Information Services; p. 186, Chrysler Corporation; p. 192, Jack Corbett.

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