

Escalating Violence in Movies

PENANG, Malaysia - All over the world, from Hollywood to Hong Kong, films are becoming increasingly violent and an international media monitoring group believes this is linked to the rise in real-life violence.

Over the past 40 years, movies have become progressively more violent and psychologically harmful to normal viewers of all ages, according to a recent study by the **International Coalition Against Violent Entertainment (ICAVE)**, which groups monitoring bodies from 23 countries.

The survey covered 1,500 films from 61 countries and concluded that 72 per cent contained some harmful violent elements, with 52 per cent being rated as either "predominantly" violent or "extremely" violent.

Of the 20 countries with 12 or more films in the 1987 sample, Hong Kong, the United States and Mexico had the undesirable distinction of producing the highest percentage of violent films. These were followed by Britain, Italy, Yugoslavia and France.

Leading the least violent film producers were Hungary, Sweden, Argentina and Brazil, Japan, West Germany, and the Soviet Union, according to the study.

The study details 220 movies of extreme violence with film reviews listing descriptions of bombings, murders, rapes, decapitations and even the disembowelment of children.

While ICAVE praised the 150 films that it says attempt to teach positive messages, it expressed great concern with the sadism and violence the it says is becoming standard theatre and home video entertainment for adults and children around the world.

Hong Kong and Mexican film companies produced a high proportion of graphically brutal and sadistic gangster films in 1987.

frightening to realize the impact this is having on our culture," Beyers says.

Andrea Pasquini of ICAVE-Italy says the harmful impact of violent films on Italian culture is "easy for anyone to see."

"We have a serious problem with violent entertainment in our country and with increasing violence among adolescents and young adults," Pasquini says. "Italy, being a significant producer of violent films, must take this problem more seriously."

According to a U.S. study, the average 11-year-old child watches nine films a month on the home television set that are theoretically restricted to viewers aged 17 and over because of the intense violence or sexually degrading material.

ICAVE estimates that the consumption of graphically violent revenge and horror films has increased at least 100-fold since 1970, and says there is overwhelming evidence that normal adult as well as children viewers are harmfully affected in unconscious ways by violent entertainment.

ICAVE states that nightmares and anxiety after the viewing of a violent film is a healthy reaction - especially where the anxiety leads the viewer to avoid such material in the future.

Unfortunately, researchers say normal viewers quickly become desensitized to the violence and no longer see these films as objectionable.

This change is accompanied by an increased tendency toward everyday loss of temper, an increased acceptance of violence as an appropriate method of dealing with conflict situations, and an increased rate of verbal and even physical aggression, they say.

ICAVE officials want governments around the world to control the level of violence in films. label video cassettes to Marital arts combat

distinguished the Hong Kong fare, while sexual violence was present in many Mexican films. Hollywood film companies were by far the leading producers of horror and "satanic horror" - the two most violent categories in the ICAVE study.

Dr. Thomas Radecki, a U.S. psychiatrist and research director for ICAVE, says: "The amount of graphic and sadistic violence contained in many of these films is simply overwhelming."

Radecki says that research on the impact of television and theatre violence has established the harmful effect on children and adult viewers from material far less violent than were found in

the 1987 films reviewed.

"It is virtually certain that the extreme violence of modern film entertainment is having a harmful effect on hundreds of millions of people around the world," he says.

ICAVE estimates that between 25 per cent and 50 per cent of all violent behavior in the United States is due to the direct and indirect effects of violent entertainment on society.

Linda Siddall of Friends of the Earth, ICAVE's Hong Kong chapter, blames violent movies for the increase in juvenile crime in the British territory.

"Movies that glamorize violence and even criminality and

use violence as a means of excitement are very destructive to our culture," Saddall says.

John Beyers of the National Viewers and Listeners Association in Britain says that video violence is becoming a major problem and that changes in film rating standards reflect the public's adaptation to screen violence.

"What is now rated as suitable for 15 year olds would have been rated as restricted to adults only a few years ago. So many video cassettes are available with extreme violence that it is warn viewers, enforce stricter ratings and even ban some of the more brutal material.

Vacationing in Texas

By Beth Wallace

Is Florida the only place to party for Spring Break?

Not any more! Welcome to South Padre Island in the South of Texas where 10,000 students invade each March.

Picture a 2 mile strip of beach surrounded by hotels and bars

with 1000's of keg's and students crammed in every direction. That's South Padre.

The economy depends on Spring Break and the Island devotes themselves to providing a good break. Everything from free concerts (Joan Jett) to 99¢ dinners.

The Island once known as Los Isles Blancas (The White Islands) is covered with sandy dunes and beaches. Coupled with excellent weather (80's) it has also earned the reputation as the surfboard capital of the U.S. Surfshops line the street and major regattas are held continuously.

South Padre is a half hour drive from Mexico where the shopping is fantastic and bars offer fantastic nights out.

The Island is much like Lauderdale in terms of bars and shopping. The same "contests" and relatively tolerant liquor laws apply but there are important differences.

The Island is small and recently developed and the population exists for break unlike Lauderdale which is an established city.

The Island has escaped the commercialism and has tried to retain the beauty of the Island. The crime rate is low and is safe to walk the beach at night.

For these reasons it has become very popular with American Springbreakers and the lure of predictable weather has Canadian universities heading to Padre as well.

Student Leadership

Student Union president Dean Frost is hoping for a successful student leadership conference this weekend.

The Annual Student Leadership Conference is organized by the Student Union and the UNB Alumni Association in an effort to bring student leaders together to discuss prominent issues affecting UNB students.

The conference will be held on Sunday, March 12th, in the Alumni Memorial Building on the UNB campus.

President Frost encourages any students who feel they could contribute to the conference to attend (contact the S.U. on Friday) and is "confident that some useful discussion will occur at the conference."

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