

How Content and Co-viewers Elicit Emotional Discomfort in Moviegoing Experiences: Where Does the Discomfort Come From and How is it Handled?

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Summary: Although watching movies is typically enjoyable, they also can elicit discomfort. The present studies investigated what makes some moviegoing experiences emotionally uncomfortable. Using autobiographical memory (Study 1) and scenarios/

Sanborn, Scott, Karafa, & Brandenburg, 2000; Harris, Hoekstra, Sanborn, Scott, Dodds, & Brandenburg, 2004). Sometimes such gender-specific reactions and behaviours include both positive and negative emotional valence, as

in a particular way, no definition or further explanation of 'uncomfortable' was offered, thus allowing respondents to consider discomfort in the broadest possible way. Results were content-analysed by two research assistants and one

during or following the film. These results are found in Table 2.

Table 2 also presents the results for how this variable was affected by discomfort source. Although participants in all conditions were unlikely to pretend to enjoy the film, when the co-viewer was the reason the participant was uncomfor-

causal direction is not certain, results showed that the

Table 7 breaks down the discomfort ratings by both film and co-viewer. Although these data must be interpreted with caution, given that there are only 15–20 participants per cell

uncomfortable'. These data are broken down by film and co-

interpretable complementary results, thus increasing the confidence in the findings.

Being exploratory research, these studies of course leave many questions unanswered. A primary one is to further

Oliver, M. B. (1993). Exploring the paradox of the enjoyment of sad films.
Human Communication Research

APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE SCENARIOS FROM STUDY 2
Sexual movie with parents