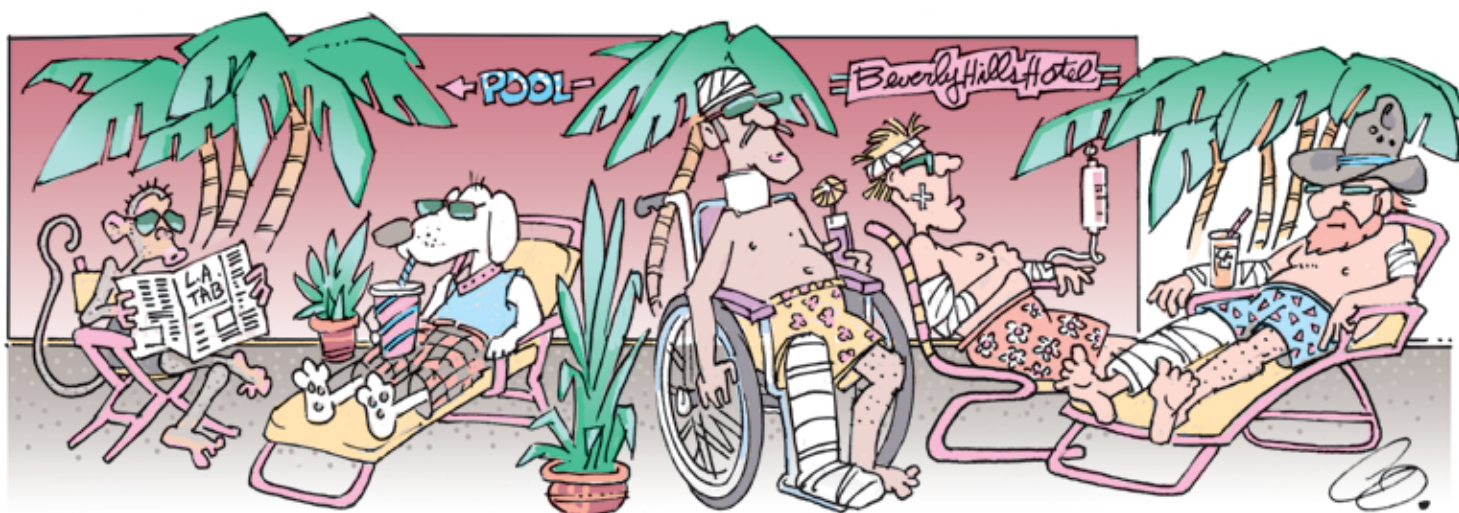


Movie Violence



Desensitization to graphic and gratuitous violence is the natural result, because the opportunity to see it is everywhere.

→ Robert E.
Horseman,
DDS

ILLUSTRATION
BY CHARLIE O.
HAYWARD

WHAM! BAM! SOCK-O!

The Good Guy takes a roundhouse right to the jaw, staggers backwards hitting his head on the edge of the bar. The Bad Guy follows quickly with an uppercut that lifts Good Guy clear off the floor, whereupon he crashes, breaking his fall with his right arm. He quickly regains his feet, grabbing a heavy wooden chair with his good left hand, bringing it full force in a short arc right into the Bad Guy's upper torso. Bad Guy catapults right through a plate glass window, landing on the small of his back against a railing where a horse reacts violently by kicking him in the rib cage.

This entertaining mayhem continues for 20 more minutes. Each man exchanges blows enthusiastically until finally,

the Bad Guy, bleeding to the point of exsanguination, reluctantly dusts off his black hat and mounts his horse, which fails to recognize him through all the blood and dirt and bites him painfully in the kidneys. "Cut!" yells the director. "Let's shoot it again, this time with a little more action!"

This is movie violence PG-13 style, an art form embraced by all red-blooded Americans since the time of William S. Hart and Tom Mix. This type of violence proved so much fun that it was soon adopted by gangster films, Saturday morning cartoons, and eventually slasher movies. In fact, in almost any genre that involved two or more individuals in disagreement, violence was the common solution.

By the time a child attained the age

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DR. BOB, CONTINUED FROM 294

of 5, he or she had witnessed enough violent death to surpass the entire population of India. And they loved it! Desensitization to graphic and gratuitous violence is the natural result, because the opportunity to see it is everywhere. TV, easily bypassed R-rated movies, DVDs, video games; it's all there for the taking.

During any one-hour prime time viewing of the popular "America's Funniest Videos," 56 males are hit in the groin by a variety of objects with enough force to render them *hors de combat* for upward of two years. This is accompanied by peals of laughter. Any mishap that appears to result in a fractured skull or at a minimum, a concussion, is cause for hilarity. Ten thousand dollars goes to the weekly victim incurring the most mirth-provoking violence. These are called "reality shows."

We know that violence in the entertainment industry has no consequences. The blood is fake, the hail of bullets is no problem, they're blanks. Makeup artists are geniuses at make believe. We are a little more caring about movie animals. "No animals were hurt during the making of this film," flashes on the screen. The ASPCA insists on it. What I would like to see in the absence of an American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty To Humans is an epilogue scrolling down at the end of the film describing what would be the real consequences of the film just screened.

The Good Guy:

- Fractured mandible, loss of two bicuspid and a first molar
- Permanent parathesia of the left mandibular nerve
- Left condyle and ramus fractured
- Collapse of the left zygomatic arch
- Permanent loss of vision in the left eye
- Acute subdural hematoma
- Multiple fractures to right wrist
- Compound fracture right radius and ulna

Everything seems to be based on the supposition that the Good Guys are exemplary and the Bad Guys are total scumbags.

Good Guy remained comatose at Cedars-Sinai ICU for six months until his SAG health benefits expired. He did the same two years later at age 34, \$892,000 in debt. His horse lived to the ripe old age of 96 and can be seen to this day, cast in bronze at a park where small children slide down his backside into a sandbox, sustaining injuries that have cost Los Angeles County more than \$7 million in out-of-court settlements.

Bad Guy:

- 17 broken bones, requiring a full-body cast for 1½ years
 - Loss of kidney function from horse bites
 - Short-term, long-term and middle-term memory affected
 - MRSA bacterial infection while hospitalized
 - Loss of mobility from fractured lumbar vertebrae
 - Displaced sternum and 14 detached ribs
 - Post-traumatic fight syndrome with attendant speech impediment
- Bad Guy never returned to films, but loyal to the entertainment business, he had paid off nearly half of his medical bills of more than \$2 million at the time of his death. He appeared at various carnivals walking about with two bolts in his neck singing the Peter Boyle version of "Puttin' On the Ritz."

Everything seems to be based on the supposition that the Good Guys are exemplary and the Bad Guys are total scumbags. This justifies any violence that occurs while the villains are being neutralized. Most of the time these unsavory people don't even have full names, so they don't deserve any sympathy. Bond ... James Bond comes up against Goldfinger, Odd Job, Jaws, Blofeld, Drax, Largo, Scaramanga, et al. Predestined losers, every one.

The hope that movie violence and its effect on the young are going to be eliminated soon is not a reasonable expectation. The suggestion that every kid ought to be whacked around just enough to indelibly instill the connection between violence and pain won't fly either.

Violence dwells where the money is, but the consequences of movie/TV violence should be an issue now that we've made it clear that no animals came to any harm during the filming. ■■■■