

Sunday List: The Inappropriate Movies We Watched as Children

written by Sara Finnerty | October 4, 2015



While Return to Oz seemed like a good movie for children, it was not. It opens with Dorothy about to be lobotomized for thinking Oz was real and just gets more terrifying. And I am still too scared to watch it again.

For this Sunday List, Entropy contributors shared the inappropriate movies they saw as children.



Byron Campbell

I saw The Neverending Story II in theaters, which would have made me about 5 at the time. My Dad was watching Misery in the next theater over. Our movie got out first, so my dad was supposed to meet us in the lobby and take us home, but he had gotten into his movie and it “didn’t seem too bad so far,” so he took us in just as the hammer was coming out.□□



Henry Hoke

Eight years old, and I couldn’t sleep, so my new babysitter let me chill with her and we watched Flatliners. I think my parents came home during the part in the movie where Death is chasing some kids through a field waving a scythe. That was the first and last time she babysat.



Janice Lee

The Deer Hunter. I was eight.



Sam Cohen

I was really into It and Poltergeist as a small child, but Silence of the Lambs terrified me – not that I’d be killed and stored for consumption, but that I’d swallow my own tongue, which I think Hannibal Lecter does while seizing? Details are fuzzy, but swallowing my tongue seemed very very possible. My tongue was just sitting there, in my mouth, waiting to be swallowed at any second if I wasn’t concentrating on not swallowing it. This plagued me for years.



David S. Atkinson

Eyes Wide Shut. I was 28.



Erin Hart Wisti

Not my story, but my dad's. Hope that's okay. He was terrified of the Twilight Zone as a child and used to run out of the room when it came on screaming, "Turn off! Turn off!" I teased him about it a lot growing up and eventually found out his fear was because of this one episode he saw when he was really, really young. I spent years and years trying to get him to tell me what it was. When I was in my early 20s, he finally confessed it was a season four episode called "He's Alive." We ended up watching it together over Christmas break and it was about a young neo Nazi haunted by the spectral image of Adolph Hitler. It ends with an amazingly well written (but depressingly still relevant) monologue about how Hitler is still alive metaphorically because there's so much hate and prejudice in the world. I'm still genuinely disturbed by that episode, even though I saw it an appropriate age.☐☐



Linda Michel-Cassidy

The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane. I probably saw it with the cousin who read me Jaws as a bedtime story.☐☐



Shane Cartledge

I remember being really young and visiting my grandma. The TV was on and Speed had just started. And while Speed isn't really a scary movie, there's this scene near the start that I remember vividly where out of nowhere this guy gets stabbed in the ear. That one scene has haunted me ever since. Can't remember how old I was at the time.☐☐



Alex Kalamaroff

I was at a friend's house in 6th grade and watched a fair amount of Pulp Fiction before my friend's dad was finally like, "I don't know if this is appropriate." But Pulp Fiction sort of confused me in 6th grade – like the whole opening bit about cunnilingus and foot massages? I was confused. I also saw Radioland Murders when I was 7 years-old and in it somebody dies by falling down an empty elevator shaft (because they weren't paying attention and thought there was an elevator there, only there wasn't ... because murder), and I terrified of a falling down an elevator shaft for many years afterward.☐☐



Berrit Ellingson

After years with Japanese horror and films like Takashi Miike's M, and MPD Psycho, I used to say I had seen everything. Then I saw another of Miike's movies, where a guy gets a ladle up his butt and gives birth to another man. That really made me think I had seen everything.



Jeremy Hight

Saw an early Cronenberg as a tween...Bugs and Id... felt brain pretzeled for a few days after ..rode my bike a lot and avoided insects for a bit□□□.



Robert Vaughn

The Exorcist: was playing at West Wayne Cinemas. We lived in a rural farm town in upstate New York. I had the idea I'd ride my bicycle to a Friday night showing when my parents were out with friends. I was 13, and the movie was rated R. My older sister's friend sold me a ticket and hid my bicycle in his tiny office. When the movie ended (past 11:30 pm) I had to ride my bike down forlorn and empty back roads. I've never been more terrified in my life.□□



Quincy Rhoads

I remember begging my dad to take me to see Enemy at the Gates in the theatre, and, even though I was fifteen, I was definitely not prepared for that sleeping bag sex scene. I couldn't sink far enough down into that grimy burgundy seat mere inches away from my father. After the credits rolled, Dad and I left in silence and we've never spoken of that trip together since.