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**NATURAL BORN SCREAMERS**  
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HOW WOMEN'S BRAINS MAKE THEM MORE LIKELY TO BE TERRIFIED

HORROR MOVIES

IT will come as no surprise to any woman who has watched Psycho through her fingers Ð or any man who has sat beside her revelling in every gory detail.

Women get more scared during horror films than men do, a study has revealed.

And it's all because they are more likely to anticipate the scary scenes that lie ahead.

When given warning of extreme violence or horror, women's brains quickly leap into action, while men's stay calm until the event unfolds.

The finding comes from University College London researchers who studied how the sexes anticipate unpleasant events.

Thirty men and women had their brain activity measured as they viewed pictures of positive and negative scenes, such as peaceful landscapes or extreme violence.

They were given a clue to the nature of the pictures in advance, with a smiling face indicating a happy scene was on the way and sad face heralding a harrowing image.

After viewing the pictures, they underwent memory tests.

The results showed that the mere anticipation of something bad was enough to kick women's brains into action Ð but not men's.

This means, for instance, that the screeching violins, violas and cellos leading up to the murder in the shower in Psycho are likely to make women move to the edge of their seat, but men won't react until they actually see the horror unfold.

Lead researcher Dr Giulia Galli said: 'When expecting a negative experience, women might have higher emotional responsiveness than men, indicated by their brain activity.

'This is likely to then affect how they remember the negative event.

'What matters for men instead is mostly the brain activity while watching the scene.'

The study also showed that the greater a woman's anticipation of the horrors, the better she remembered them afterwards.

Writing in The Journal of Neuroscience, the researchers said: 'From an evolutionary perspective, anticipating an aversive event may help an individual prepare reactions in threatening situations.

'In everyday life, however, excessive anticipation of future harm may lead to psychiatric disorders such as anxiety and depression.'

Ö Films that glamorise smoking should be given an 18 rating to protect youngsters, an academic has demanded. Dr Christopher Millett, of Imperial College London, said in journal PLoS Medicine that there are powerful links between tobacco imagery in movies and experimentation with cigarettes by youths.

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**Women's brains 'make them more scared during horror movies';   
Women's brains make them more likely to be terrified by horror movies, researchers have found.**  
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Men and women differ in the way they anticipate an unpleasant emotional experience, which influences the effectiveness with which that experience is committed to memory, according to new research.

In a study it was found that women get more scared than men during horror films because they are more likely to anticipate the scary scenes that lie ahead.

Thirty men and women had their brain activity measured as they viewed positive and negative pictures, such as nice landscapes and extreme violence.

They were given a clue to the picture in advance, such as a smiley face for a positive image and a sad face for a disturbing one.

The participants then underwent a memory test which showed that the anticipation of seeing something bad caused a heightened brain acitivty amongst women but triggered nothing in men.

Dr Giulia Galli, lead author from the UCL Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience said: "When expecting a negative experience, women might have a higher emotional responsiveness than men, indicated by their brain activity.

This is likely to then affect how they remember the negative event."

"For example, when watching disturbing scenes in films there are often cues before anything 'bad' happens, such as emotive music.

This research suggests that the brain activity in women between the cue and the disturbing scene influences how that scene will be remembered.

What matters for memory in men instead is mostly the brain activity while watching the scene.

"This finding might be relevant for psychiatric disorders such as anxiety, in which there is excessive anticipation of future threat and memory is often biased towards negative experiences."