

# Expectations for new star wars movie could sway your viewing pleasure

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(HealthDay)—Millions of Americans have filled movie theaters over the

holidays to watch the latest in the Star Wars saga, but a new study suggests that enjoyment of the film may be governed by prior expectations.

To see how expectations affect viewing pleasure, researchers surveyed 441 people before and after they saw "Star Wars: Episode VIII—The Last Jedi" in 2017.

Based on the results, it's best not to see "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" believing you're going to love or hate it, said researcher James Alex Bonus, an assistant professor of communication at Ohio State University, in Columbus.

People who had high expectations for the movie but were disappointed had the lowest enjoyment of anyone.

Those who expected little from the movie but felt happy after seeing the film had lower overall enjoyment compared with people who had high expectations for the film and enjoyed watching it, researchers found.

"It wasn't really helping people to go in with those low expectations," Bonus said in a university news release.

"The negative bias going in dragged them down and even if they were pleasantly surprised by the movie, they still didn't like it as much as other people did," Bonus noted.

It's a lot less about what's in the movie and a lot more about what you expected it to be, he explained.

Three weeks before the release of "The Last Jedi," study participants were asked to rate how happy, sad and nostalgic they thought the film would make them feel. People who said the movie would make them

feel nostalgic were more likely to go see the movie three weeks later. But expectations about whether the movie would make them feel happy did not predict if they would go see the film or not.

"That shows the important role nostalgia plays for audiences of established franchises like Star Wars," Bonus noted.

The researchers also found that people were not able to predict how they would react to the movie. About 55% of participants didn't accurately predict how the movie would make them feel.

"We are really bad at predicting how future events will make us feel," Bonus said.

The report was published online in the December issue of the *Journal of Media Psychology*.

**More information:** For more on predicting feeling, head to the [American Psychological Association](#).

The Cost of Clairvoyance, Enjoyment and Appreciation of a Popular Movie as a Function of Affective Forecasting Errors,  
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