

COPY

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DIVISION C.
Regional Health Services

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Director of Health Education.

All Regional Medical Health Officers.

Mental Mechanism Film: FEELINGS OF DEPRESSION.

This fourth film in the series by the National Film Board for the Department of National Health and Welfare will go out on rural N.F.B. circuits in Saskatchewan starting Monday, January 8. Attached is information regarding the film and suggestions of N.F.B. for guidance of group leaders and resource people.

We have screened a test print here to two groups consisting chiefly of professional and semi-professional people. The concensus of reaction has been that this is a good picture and valuable for staff training, but that it should be shown lay groups only when adequate discussion leadership is available. Some thought the picture should not be shown to lay audiences, and a few thought that it might be harmful in the absence of adequate explanation and discussion leadership. We have urged Ottawa to add a trailer, as in the case of FEELINGS OF HOSTILITY.

The Division of Health Education recalls that similar reactions were noted when the other mental-mechanism pictures were introduced; subsequently it was noted that the pictures were not unsuitable for lay education. However, this is a quite different film. It is more complex in some respects, and it generalizes too much in others. It leaves the audience "up in the air" as it were, due to a rather abrupt end. There is a pronounced emotional impact on even professional people.

Unfortunately the N.F.B. field staff are not specifically trained in mental hygiene, and, moreover, while they attend as many screenings as possible, staff limitations confine their association with this and other films considerably, and for the most part they arrange and supervise the itineraries, leaving the screening and leadership to local groups, i.e. Home and School Associations, Film Councils. An effort is made to find resource leaders. For instance, there is close co-ordination with regional staffs in several of the health regions. We asked N.F.B. personnel some time ago to work with the regional health officers and their staffs, and we believe that this is being done.

It will be of considerable assistance to us, and through us to N.F.B. and the other Ottawa authorities if you will kindly let us know what the experiences are with this film in your area. If you can let us have a report after two weeks it will be appreciated; take longer if necessary. We should like to know how many screenings were conducted without professional leadership of one kind or another. How many were your staff able to attend? In how many other places was the lay leadership adequate? What was the audience reaction? Were there many questions, and did they denote interest? Did they reflect that the audiences got something constructive out of the picture; or were people bewildered? Were the leaders able to lead the discussion into constructive channels? How many screenings were there without any discussion? And, finally, please let us have your own opinion of the film as a medium for lay education.

Christian Smith,
Director of
Health Education.

CS,EA
Encl.